THE Nation.

All figures:
per 10 windmills

MAKING THE ECONOMY WORK FOR PEOPLE—AND THE PLANET

BUILDING A GREEN RECOVERY

FEBRUARY 16, 2009
www.thenation.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reduce your carbon footprint with a CREDO Mobile handset.

Become a member of America's greenest phone company – the first to be certified by Carbonfund.org for offsetting estimated emissions from handset shipping and usage. We believe so strongly in environmental justice and progressive change we'll even buy out your current contract, up to $200, and give you a free camera phone, complete with carbon offsets.*

FREE CAMERA PHONE
FREE CONTRACT BUYOUT
FREE CARBON OFFSETS

877.76.CREDO
credomobile.com
special offer code: 500215

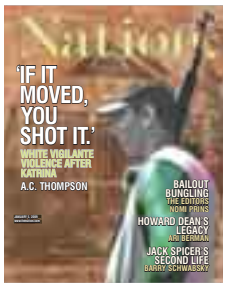
CREDO™ mobile
more than a network. a movement.

Brought to you by Working Assets

* All with two-year CREDO Mobile service agreement. Offer subject to credit qualification. Contract buyout: CREDO Mobile will credit your account (up to $200) 30 days after receiving a copy of your prior carrier's termination fee charges; details to follow by mail. Offer only available to new CREDO Mobile customers.

©2008 CREDO

Letters



…We All Scream for Howard Dean!

Kamuela, Hawaii
Thanks so much to Ari Berman for his tribute to Howard Dean ["The Prophet," Jan. 5]. Most of my adult life I lived in southwest Virginia, near Roanoke. In 2004, I wrote the DNC several times suggesting they put some effort into Virginia. Local party leaders were discouraged that they weren't getting any help from the DNC for down-ballot elections and almost no attention for the presidential race. To us on the ground, it was clear that in addition to a growing progressive movement, there were plenty of pissed-off good ol' boys disgusted by the fraternity party in the White House. Also, former GOP Governor Jim Gilmore was widely despised for nearly bankrupting the state during his term, which ended in 2002 with the election of Democrat Mark Warner. In 2006 we elected another Democratic governor and Senator Jim Webb. Had the Beltway Dems listened to Dean in 2003, the last four years might have been very different.
Vicki Dunaway

Katrina Vigilantes

Washington, D.C.
What an extraordinary piece of investigative journalism by A.C. Thompson ["Katrina's Hidden Race War," "Body of Evidence," Jan. 5], and what a horror story it tells about how powerful racism still is. The boasts of the Katrina vigilantes echo the smiling faces of the white onlookers/participants in lynchings in newspaper photos and tourist postcards.
Chester Hartman
Poverty & Race Research Action Council; Co-editor; There Is No Such Thing as a Natural Disaster: Race, Class and Hurricane Katrina

Birmingham, Ala.
You would do better to stick to honest journalism, not the sensationalism A.C. Thompson peddles. Did white vigilantes take advantage of a horrific circumstance to commit illegal acts? Probably. Did some citizens, black and white, use the same circumstance to rob and loot? Probably. Was there a "race war" against innocent black citizens, or was there an attempt by homeowners to protect their property against looting and vandalism? The inaction of the NOPD, which Thompson mentions, left many with little choice of action. Should the citizens of Algiers Point have been more charitable? Obviously. But that does not equal a "race war." Though Thompson does his best with little evidence to paint an incendiary picture of white racists waging war on their black neighbors, the probability of that is low. Does there need to be a Justice Department investigation into this? Yes, most definitely. But it needs to be a sober and unbiased investigation that relies on more than the hearsay of supposed victims and the drunk ramblings of racists.
Jerry Darrell Strickland

Des Moines
I am a survivor of Hurricane Katrina. Henry Glover was my first cousin, so I can corroborate A.C. Thompson's story. We were with Henry when he decided to go back to his apartment before he was killed. We wondered what happened to him. We were told he was killed by rogue police officers. I applaud you for bringing his story to life, as we have been unable to get any answers or justice for his death. Our family member was murdered by people who were supposed to protect us. I moved to Des Moines after the death of my dear cousin and miss him daily.
Cotrena Mcintyre

Genesee, Idaho
Reading A.C. Thompson's article was painful: the race intolerance that led a niece to say of her uncle, "For him, the opportunity to hunt black people was a joy." We have a right to be excited about Obama and the expected change and new beginning after the last eight years, but what kind of new beginning will it be if the old racism still exists?
Charlene Schilling

letters@thenation.com

(continued on page 32)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Nation.
since 1865

Let the Sun Shine In

Repairing the damage done by George W. Bush will take years, but some problems can be solved with the stroke of a pen. That's what President Obama did about excessive government secrecy. On his first day in office, he issued an executive order on freedom of information. "For a long time now there's been too much secrecy in this city," he said. "The old rules said that if there was a defensible argument for not disclosing something to the American people, then it should not be disclosed. That era is now over. Starting today, every agency and department should know that this administration stands on the side not of those who seek to withhold information but those who seek to make it known."

COMMENT

This is good news not just for journalists and historians but for everybody—because democracy requires an informed citizenry. The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), passed in 1966 and strengthened in 1974 in the wake of the Watergate scandal, is based on a simple notion: if people can't find out what their government is doing, they can't determine whether to support or oppose the officials in charge.

There is a deep-seated tendency in all bureaucracies toward secrecy. Classified files, confidential documents and official secrets are the means by which bureaucracies everywhere prevent scrutiny and criticism. So the act requires all federal agencies to release any information requested by any person—unless it falls under a few carefully defined exemptions, including personal privacy and national security. And it gives the federal courts the power to order agencies to release documents that have been improperly withheld.

The Bush administration did immense damage to FOIA and to the principle of freedom of information. A month after 9/11, then–Attorney General John Ashcroft issued a memo informing all agency heads that when they refused to release requested information, "you can be assured that the Department of Justice will defend your decisions."

Even before Bush, FOIA requests met with long delays, and released documents often had extensive deletions. Under the Bush administration, the delays were considerably longer and the denials much more frequent. For example, the Clinton administration in 1998 released 44 percent of CIA files requested under FOIA; Bush in 2007 released just 11 percent. Denials and deletions can be appealed in court, but litigation against the government is expensive and time-consuming. Only the most dedicated organizations can hope to uncover facts about official misconduct.

If Bush made it harder to get documents under FOIA, he made it virtually impossible to get sensitive documents of past presidents. The Presidential Records Act, passed in 1978 in response to Richard Nixon's claim that he had a right to destroy his White House tapes, established the principle that presidential papers (and tapes) belong to the people—forever. But under Bush's post-9/11 executive order, a serving president could withhold records of his predecessors, and past presidents and vice presidents had the right to withhold documents dating from their administration. Even heirs were given this right.

That meant Bush and Cheney could keep their presidential records secret; George H.W. Bush could prevent historians from seeing his records; and Julie Nixon Eisenhower could block access to her father's papers. Under Bush's order, any presidential or vice presidential documents could be kept secret indefinitely.

Obama repealed the Bush policy. "This order ends the practice of having others besides the president assert executive privilege for records after an administra-

Inside

2 Letters

Editorials & Comment

3 **Let the Sun Shine In**
JON WIENER

4 **Go Geoghegan!**

5 **Noted**

6 **Bush's War Totals**
JOHN TIRMAN

6 **Senate Selection Scam**
JOHN NICHOLS

8 **100 Days**
Never Say You're Sorry
CHRISTOPHER HAYES

10 **The Mitchell Moment**
ROANE CAREY

Columns

6 **Deadline Poet**
So It Goes With Wall Street Titan John A. Thain
CALVIN TRILLIN

11 **The Liberal Media**
The Defamation League
ERIC ALTERMAN

12 **Beneath the Radar**
Beyond Hope
GARY YOUNGE

Articles

13 **Doing the Recovery Right**
ROBERT POLLIN

15 **The Power of Transparency**
GREG LEROY

18 **Help Wanted for Green Jobs**
LIZA FEATHERSTONE

24 **Ticket to Ride**
BEN ADLER

26 **Here Comes the Sun**
CRAIG D. ROSE

29 **Newark's Great Green Hope**
J. LESTER FEDER

31 **Good Work—If Youth Can Find It**
KRISTINA RIZGA

Books & the Arts

33 **Further Adventures in Editing**
TED SOLOTAROFF

41 **BACK TALK:** Nato Thompson
CHRISTINE SMALLWOOD

42 **WAGENSTEIN:** Isaac's Torah
WAGENSTEIN: Farewell, Shanghai
AKIVA GOTTLIEB

COVER DESIGN BY GENE CASE & STEPHEN KLING/AVENGING ANGELS; ILLUSTRATIONS BY KAREN CALDICOTT AND DOUG CHAYKA

VOLUME 288, NUMBER 6, FEBRUARY 16, 2009
PRINTED JANUARY 28

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Nation.

EDITOR & PUBLISHER: Katrina vanden Heuvel

PRESIDENT: Teresa Stack

MANAGING EDITOR: Roane Carey
LITERARY EDITOR: John Palattella
EXECUTIVE EDITOR: Betsy Reed
SENIOR EDITORS: Richard Lingeman, Richard Kim
WEB EDITOR: Joan Connell
COPY CHIEF: Judith Long
ASSISTANT LITERARY EDITOR: Miriam Markowitz
COPY EDITOR: Mark Sorkin
ASSISTANT COPY EDITOR: Dave Baker
COPY ASSOCIATE: Lisa Vandepaer
ASSISTANT WEB EDITOR: Adam Howard
ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR: Peggy Suttle
INTERNS: Gabriel Gil Arana, Laura C. Dean (*Washington*), Corbin W. Hiar, Uzma Kolsy, Madeleine Kuhns, Loren A. Lynch, Cassie Metcalf-Slovo, Keith Newell, Elyssa Pachico, Gabriela Resto-Montero

WASHINGTON: EDITOR: Christopher Hayes; **CORRESPONDENT:** John Nichols

NATIONAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT: William Greider

COLUMNISTS: Eric Alterman, Alexander Cockburn, Naomi Klein, Katha Pollitt, Patricia J. Williams, Gary Younge

DEPARTMENTS: *Architecture*, Jane Holtz Kay; *Art*, Arthur C. Danto; *Corporations*, Robert Sherrill; *Defense*, Michael T. Klare; *Environment*, Mark Hertsgaard; *Films*, Stuart Klawans; *Legal Affairs*, David Cole; *Net Movement*, Ari Melber; *Peace and Disarmament*, Jonathan Schell; *Poetry*, Peter Gizzi; *Sex*, JoAnn Wypijewski; *Sports*, Dave Zirin; *United Nations*, Barbara Crossette; *Deadline Poet*, Calvin Trillin

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Kai Bird, Robert L. Borosage, Stephen F. Cohen, Marc Cooper, Mike Davis, Slavenka Drakulić, Robert Dreyfuss, Susan Faludi, Thomas Ferguson, Doug Henwood, Max Holland, Michael Moore, Christian Parenti, Richard Pollak, Joel Rogers, Karen Rothmyer, Robert Scheer, Herman Schwartz, Bruce Shapiro, Edward Sorel, Gore Vidal, Jon Wiener, Amy Wilentz, Art Winslow

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Ari Berman, Lakshmi Chaudhry, William Deresiewicz, Liza Featherstone, Bob Moser, Eyal Press, Scott Sherman

BUREAUS: *London*, Maria Margaronis and D.D. Guttenplan; *Southern Africa*, Mark Gevisser

EDITORIAL BOARD: Deepak Bhargava, Norman Birnbaum, Barbara Ehrenreich, Richard Falk, Frances FitzGerald, Eric Foner, Philip Green, Lani Guinier, Tom Hayden, Tony Kushner, Elinor Langer, Deborah W. Meier, Toni Morrison, Walter Mosley, Victor Navasky, Pedro Antonio Noguera, Richard Parker, Michael Pertschuk, Elizabeth Pochoda, Marcus G. Raskin, Kristina Rizga, Andrea Batista Schlesinger, David Weir, Roger Wilkins

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, SPECIAL PROJECTS/WEBSITE: Peter Rothberg
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, DEVELOPMENT/ASSOCIATES: Peggy Randall
VICE PRESIDENT, ADVERTISING: Ellen Bollinger
ADVERTISING MANAGER, SMALL DISPLAY, EVENTS, CLASSIFIED: Amanda Hale
WEB SALES MANAGER: Nancy Wildermuth
VICE PRESIDENT, CIRCULATION: Arthur Stupar
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Michelle O'Keefe
CIRCULATION FULFILLMENT MANAGER: Miriam Camp
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR: Omar Rubio
TYPOGRAPHER/WEB PRODUCER: Sandy McCroskey
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Timothy Don
NATION ASSOCIATES MANAGER: Joliange Wright
PUBLICITY AND SYNDICATION DIRECTOR: Ben Wyskida
EDUCATION/COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR: Habiba Alcindor
TECHNOLOGY MANAGER: Amiri K. Barksdale
ONLINE DIRECTOR: Jeff Larson
WEB PRODUCER: Kellye Rogers
WEB PRODUCER: Melisa St. Prix
CONTROLLER: Mary van Valkenburg
ASSISTANT TO VICTOR NAVASKY: Mary Taylor Schilling
DATA ENTRY/MAIL COORDINATOR: John Holtz
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT: Kathleen Thomas
RECEPTIONIST/BUSINESS ASSISTANT: Elizabeth Berniak
ADVERTISING ASSISTANT: Kit Gross
CLERK: Shavonne Frazier
ACADEMIC LIAISON: Charles Bittner

PUBLISHER EMERITUS: Victor Navasky

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: E-mail to letters@thenation.com (300-word limit). Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity.

SUBMISSIONS: Queries only, no manuscripts. Go to www.thenation.com and click on "about," then "submissions" for a query form. Queries may be mailed to The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. SASE for poems.

INTERNET: Selections from the current issue become available Thursday night at www.thenation.com.

Printed on 100% recycled 40% post-consumer acid- and chlorine-free paper, in the USA.

This week at thenation.com

NEWS & ANALYSIS
From the Archive: Evaluating Updike
Eric Alterman on William Kristol
Barbara Crossette: Obama and population control
Terry Jones: 'My Future as an Arms Maker'

SLIDE SHOW
'Our Fragile Planet'

VIDEO NATION
A city made of waste

OUR READERS
Lost your job? Tell your story!

tion ends," a White House press release said. Obama added, "I will also hold myself, as president, to a new standard of openness."

There will be many battles to come, especially over the definition of national security and the standards for classification of documents. But Obama's swift action—on the first day of his presidency—answers one question: can we have more openness in government? Yes we can. JON WIENER

Jon Wiener, a Nation *contributing editor, is professor of history at UC Irvine and the author of* Gimme Some Truth: The John Lennon FBI Files.

Go Geoghegan!

EDITORIAL

For most of his career, Tom Geoghegan has lived a double life. By day he is a Chicago labor lawyer, representing clients caught in the bear trap of deindustrialization, downsizing and unionbusting. He has represented folks who have lost their pensions or been denied their rightful benefits—even union members taking on corrupt union bureaucracies. As the unionized workforce has dwindled and the possibility of making a living in labor law along with it, Geoghegan has branched out, suing payday lenders for their usurious exploitation of the poor and helping represent the City of Chicago in its suit against gun manufacturers.

Meanwhile Geoghegan has also carved out a career as one of the finest, most stylish and profound nonfiction writers in America. His book on the labor movement, *Which Side Are You On?*, is a masterpiece, as is his elegy on the decline of our civic sensibility, *The Secret Lives of Citizens*. In article after article (including ones in these pages) Geoghegan approaches the problems of our democracy from so far outside the parameters of ordinary discourse that it sometimes seems he's arrived from a wiser, more humane planet. His writing has a way of illuminating what our new president has called "the smallness of our politics."

Now Geoghegan is running for Congress in Illinois's 5th District, the seat vacated by Rahm Emanuel (the all-important primary is March 3). It is an honor for this magazine to give him our full endorsement. We're not the only ones who feel this way; since he threw his hat in the ring, a broad and eclectic group of progressive activists, union officials and writers have sung Tom's praises. Our own Katha Pollitt called him "the next Paul Wellstone," and David Sirotasaid he was "one of the greatest living progressives in America."

Geoghegan's platform should be a model for Democrats in the post-meltdown era. He advocates *increasing* the payout on Social Security so that those who have watched the stock market gobble up their life's savings can retire with dignity; single-payer universal healthcare; and full nationalization of the failing financial sector instead of the ghastly corporate welfare that characterizes the no-strings-attached TARP bailout. Geoghegan is a dark horse in a crowded field with thirteen others, some of whom are competent public servants. But none have the vision, the passion or the real-life experience of fighting for people left behind by our post-Reagan economy like Geoghegan. We urge our readers to support him.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Noted.

GAG OVERRULED: On January 23, one day after the thirty-sixth anniversary of **Roe v. Wade**, President **Barack Obama** overturned the Mexico City policy, *aka* the global gag rule, which barred US funds for overseas health organizations that so much as mentioned abortion in their work. Score one for women's rights, women's health, free speech and international family planning. Contrary to **David Brooks**, who, while admitting total ignorance, opined on **The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer** that the gag rule had no practical effect, the International Planned Parenthood Federation estimates that it lost $100 million in US funding. The **Marie Stopes International** family planning organization closed down four programs in Kenya, Ethiopia and Nepal. Meanwhile, funding that had gone to family planning was shifted to evangelical groups promoting abstinence. If Obama restores US support for the UN Population Fund—vetoed for eight long years by **George W. Bush** on bogus charges that it funded forced abortions in China—the dismal picture for women's reproductive health in the developing world will surely brighten.

Still, it's insulting that healthcare so essential to women's well-being is dependent on the good will of the president, like some kind of medieval boon. Can you imagine, say, funding for heart disease being swapped in and out of the budget depending on whether a Republican or a Democrat occupies the White House? To please right-wing Christians, women in far-off lands suffered fistulas and other horrible pregnancy-related conditions, wore themselves out physically and emotionally in childbearing and died in great numbers from pregnancy, labor and illegal abortions; children died in infancy, were impoverished and orphaned. For now, that's over. But in four years? Eight years? KATHA POLLITT

IRAN'S WAR ON AIDS: On January 21 two HIV/AIDS physicians, **Kamiar and Arash Alaei**, were sentenced by Tehran's Revolutionary Court to three and six years in prison, respectively, for "communicating with an enemy government." As with the cases of **Haleh Esfandiari** and **Kian Tajbakhsh**, respected Iranian-American scholars arrested for similar "offenses" but eventually released in 2007, the Alaeis' case has been met with outcry from organizations like **Physicians for Human Rights**, which called the charges against them "illegitimate and politically motivated."

The Alaeis, who are brothers, are leaders in the field of HIV/AIDS treatment. In 2003 the World Health Organization singled out for praise the national network of AIDS clinics they established in Iran, and their work has received funding from major international donors as well as the Iranian government. In 2006 Kamiar moved to the United States to pursue graduate study in public health, and Arash visited often to lecture. Their efforts seem to have made them targets of the hardline Iranian government, which has begun to use US contacts as a pretext for prosecuting civil society actors. The brothers were arrested in Tehran in June and have been held largely incommunicado since then.

The Alaeis' lawyer plans to appeal the verdicts. More than 3,100 medical professionals have signed a petition at **iranfreethedocs.org** calling for their release. MEGAN BUSKEY

GHANA'S ACHIEVEMENT: The month of January featured not one but two notable inaugurations. As **Barack Obama** headed toward the White House, the arrival of **John Atta Mills** in Ghana's presidential palace also signaled a hopeful advance for democracy. In a free and fair runoff election monitored by EU observers, Atta Mills of the social democratic **National Democratic Congress** (NDC) defeated **Nana Akufo-Addo** of the free market–oriented incumbent **New Patriotic Party** (NPP) by a margin of less than 0.5 percent. Atta Mills campaigned to bridge the country's development gap and stop the growth of corruption, which ballooned under the NPP. His peaceful accession to power in Accra stands in stark contrast to the widespread violence that marred the outcomes of similar contests in Nigeria and Kenya in 2007, and recently in **Robert Mugabe**'s Zimbabwe. Akufo-Addo and the outgoing president, **John Kufuor**, who stepped down after serving the constitutional maximum of two terms, attended the January 7 inauguration. UN Secretary-General **Ban Ki-moon** praised the "democratic achievement" of Ghana and its leaders for "setting an admirable example." CORBIN HIAR

A NEW SCIENCE: Why has everyone heard of human rights lawyers and pro bono legal advocates but not human rights mathematicians and pro bono biophysicists? For decades, the professional culture in the sciences has frowned on engagement in social issues, holding that disinterested, unbiased scientific methods require disinterested and unbiased minds. But the groundbreaking scientists who exposed the dangers of climate change and the extent of civilian mortality in Iraq, among other issues, have proved that good science can be conducted in the service of human rights. And now, just in time for the new administration to "restore science to its rightful place," the **American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)**—the world's largest and one of the most prestigious scientific associations—has sent a powerful signal to the scientific masses that social engagement is not just legit but necessary.

In mid-January representatives from some fifty mainstream scientific associations, from the **American Medical Association** and the **Biophysical Society** to the **Mathematical Association of America** and the **American Meteorological Society**, met at AAAS's Washington headquarters to brainstorm ways to encourage their members to speak out against human rights violations and support established rights-oriented organizations. The result: the AAAS's **Science and Human Rights Coalition**, which will promote this work and channel scientist-volunteers to these organizations. "Human rights activists and scientists are both in pursuit of the truth; it's a natural partnership," enthused **EarthRights International** activist **Matthew Smith**, one of a handful of advocates rubbing shoulders with the AAAS scientists, Nobel laureates among them. Sure, agreed coalition co-founder **Mona Younis**, although she also had a more competitive goal in mind. "We're going to beat all those pro bono lawyers," she said. SONIA SHAH

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bush's War Totals

We are now able to estimate the number of Iraqis who have died in the war instigated by the Bush administration. Looking at the empirical evidence of Bush's war legacy will put his claims of victory in perspective. Of course, even by his standards—"stability"—the jury is out. Most independent analysts would say it's too soon to judge the political outcome. Nearly six years after the invasion, the country remains riven by sectarian politics and major unresolved issues, like the status of Kirkuk.

COMMENT

We have a better grasp of the human costs of the war. For example, the United Nations estimates that there are about 4.5 million displaced Iraqis—more than half of them refugees—or about one in every six citizens. Only 5 percent have chosen to return to their homes over the past year, a period of reduced violence from the high levels of 2005–07. The availability of healthcare, clean water, functioning schools, jobs and so forth remains elusive. According to Unicef, many provinces report that less than 40 percent of households have access to clean water. More than 40 percent of children in Basra, and more than 70 percent in Baghdad, cannot attend school.

The mortality caused by the war is also high. Several household surveys were conducted between 2004 and 2007. While there are differences among them, the range suggests a congruence of estimates. But none have been conducted for eighteen months, and the two most reliable surveys were completed in mid-2006. The higher of those found 650,000 "excess deaths" (mortality attributable to war); the other yielded 400,000. The war remained ferocious for twelve to fifteen months after those surveys were finished and then began to subside. Iraq Body Count, a London NGO that uses English-language press reports from Iraq to count civilian deaths, provides a means to update the 2006 estimates. While it is known to be an undercount, because press reports are incomplete and Baghdad-centric, IBC nonetheless provides useful trends, which are striking. Its estimates are nearing 100,000, more than double its June 2006 figure of 45,000. (It does not count nonviolent excess deaths—from health emergencies, for example—or insurgent deaths.) If this is an acceptable marker, a plausible estimate of total deaths can be calculated by doubling the totals of the 2006 household surveys, which used a much more reliable and sophisticated method for estimates that draws on long experience in epidemiology. So we have, at present, between 800,000 and 1.3 million "excess deaths" as we approach the six-year anniversary of this war.

This gruesome figure makes sense when reading of claims by Iraqi officials that there are 1–2 million war widows and 5 million orphans. This constitutes direct empirical evidence of total excess mortality and indirect, though confirming, evidence of the displaced and the bereaved and of general insecurity. The overall figures are stunning: 4.5 million displaced, 1–2 million widows, 5 million orphans, about 1 million dead—in one way or another, affecting nearly one in two Iraqis.

By any sensible measure, it would be difficult to describe this as a victory of any kind. It speaks volumes about the repair work we must do for Iraqis, and it should caution us against the savage wars we are prone to. Now that Bush is gone, perhaps the United States can honestly face the damage we have wrought and the responsibilities we must accept from it. JOHN TIRMAN

John Tirman is executive director and principal research scientist at the MIT Center for International Studies.

Calvin Trillin, Deadline Poet

So It Goes With Wall Street Titan John A. Thain

They used to say that John A. Thain
Was master of the Street's domain.
His copy book, though, got a blotch
When, losing billions on his watch,
He didn't recognize some onus
On taking quite a hefty bonus
Or buying for his suite ambrosian
Décor Kozlowski might have chosen.
And now, they say, you'd search in vain
For dimmer bulbs than John A. Thain.

Senate Selection Scam

Americans who imagined their Senate as a democratically elected body representing the popular will were rudely disabused of that notion after the presidential election, when the departure of four senators to the White House and cabinet unleashed a frenzy of back-room wheeling, dealing and scheming so extreme it has led to charges of patronage and nepotism, an arrest and an impeachment.

COMMENT

Regardless of the personal or political merits of newly minted senators Michael Bennet of Colorado, Ted Kaufman of Delaware, Kirsten Gillibrand of New York and Roland Burris of Illinois—two electoral newcomers, an admitted statewide unknown and a five-time loser running for governor, senator and mayor—it is no stretch to suggest they were ill positioned to get to Washington by unseating incumbents or winning open seats. Instead, all four benefited from a constitutional loophole that allows governors to fill Senate vacancies according to their whims.

At the opening of the American experiment, the founders borrowed several ideas from the British Empire, against which they had recently rebelled. They established a legislative branch with two chambers: a popularly elected variation on the House of Commons and an elite variation on the House of Lords. Members of the House of Representatives would be elected via regularly scheduled elections and, when vacancies occurred, special elections. Members of the Senate would be selected by the solons of the various state legislatures. Appalled by the bar-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

you don't just get a phone.

you get a voice.

Like any other top-tier mobile company, CREDO Mobile offers the latest phones. But unlike anyone else, we also offer a powerful way for you to stand up for your values. Through citizen lobbying campaigns and automatic donations to groups like Doctors Without Borders, CREDO members are making a real difference every day. At CREDO Mobile, we make sure your voice is heard — in Washington, too.

Join us at credomobile.com
877.76.CREDO

Brought to you by Working Assets

CREDO™ mobile

more than a network.
a movement.

© 2008 CREDO

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tering off of seats to wealthy and connected bidders, in 1913 Progressive reformers succeeded in amending the Constitution, shifting the selection of senators from the back rooms to the ballot box. Unfortunately, the Seventeenth Amendment was badly written, with one lesser clause allowing state legislatures to grant governors the right to make "temporary" appointments.

Through that loophole have passed more than 180 senators. Some, such as Alaska's Ted Stevens, have parlayed appointments into Washington careers that stretched for decades. And in the era of big money and professionalized campaigning, it's even easier for appointees to hold their seats—in the past dozen years, only one appointed senator has been beaten in the next election. So now there are a lot of appointees: in addition to the four newcomers, five others were initially selected rather than elected.

The sheer volume of vacancies in the aftermath of last fall's election focused attention on scandal-plagued gubernatorial appointments. But it took Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich's sleazy maneuvering to fill Obama's seat to expose how badly the process can be corrupted. Then–Delaware Governor Ruth Ann Minner's decision to fill Joe Biden's seat with a former aide to the senator is seen by many as a placeholder for Biden's son, and New York Governor David Paterson's overwrought struggle to fill Hillary Clinton's seat stirred more concerns—and, with them, calls for the direct election of *all* senators.

Cheered on by the group FairVote, legislators in Rhode Island and Maryland have proposed measures to have their states follow the lead of Wisconsin, Oregon, Alaska and Massachusetts, which require special elections to fill Senate vacancies. And on the eve of Blagojevich's impeachment trial, Senator Russ Feingold announced plans to introduce a constitutional amendment requiring special elections to fill Senate vacancies. "The controversies surrounding some of the recent gubernatorial appointments to vacant Senate seats make it painfully clear that such appointments are an anachronism that must end," he explained.

Feingold's amendment is more than just a good-government initiative. It renews the promise of a previous generation of Progressive reformers who wisely asserted that the best cure for what ails democracy is more democracy. JOHN NICHOLS

Never Say You're Sorry

100 DAYS

Odds are you've never heard of Gary Gensler, the man President Obama has nominated to run the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC). But it's slightly more likely you've heard of Brooksley Born, the woman who held that position under Clinton in the late 1990s. Amid the cascading financial crisis and cries of "Nobody could have predicted!" from many of those who were instrumental in bringing it about, Born has emerged as one of the rare voices that warned of the perils ahead. In 1997 she began to sound the alarm about the growth in the derivatives market, which, unlike traditional futures, were not traded on a regulated exchange. Born argued that derivatives should be brought under regulatory supervision, or they "could pose potentially serious dangers to our economy."

She proved prescient. These instruments, specifically credit default swaps, increased risk throughout the global financial system, eventually bringing down AIG, the world's largest insurance conglomerate. George Soros, economist Alan Blinder and many others now name the failure to regulate credit default swaps as one of the prime causes of the collapse.

But in 1998 powerful voices close to the Clinton administration—Robert Rubin, Larry Summers and Alan Greenspan—argued that the derivatives market was just fine. They had allies among the Wall Street banks who were making money hand over fist in the unregulated, over-the-counter market.

Then there was Phil Gramm, the mastermind behind the 2000 Commodity Futures Modernization Act, which definitively kept derivatives unregulated. Attached to a massive omnibus bill during the lame-duck Congress in December 2000, while the nation's attention was captivated by *Bush v. Gore*, the CFMA passed overwhelmingly in both houses and was signed into law by President Clinton. But Gramm wasn't sneaking anything past the White House, which had hammered out the details in lengthy negotiations with the senator. And one of the men charged with shepherding the bill through Congress was none other than the Treasury's under secretary for domestic finance, Gary Gensler.

Gensler was well qualified to dive into the arcana, having spent eighteen years at Goldman Sachs before taking a job at Treasury. When it came to derivatives, he shared the prevailing deregulatory ethos. (He declined to speak to me on the record for this column.) The *New York Times* editorial board found Obama's nomination of Gensler "troubling." Iowa Senator Tom Harkin, who chairs the Agriculture Committee, which has jurisdiction over Gensler's nomination, released a statement saying that he is "concerned about the deregulatory orientation in this nominee's past." And fellow committee member Bernie Sanders issued this terse statement: "It is imperative that we not continue the same mistaken policies that got us into this mess in the first place. I have real concerns."

In Gensler's defense, he did do regulatory penance. He worked for Representative Paul Sarbanes helping to craft Sarbanes-Oxley, and he wrote a book criticizing the mutual fund industry for the ways it rips off investors. But the fact remains: on the biggest issue of commodity futures regulation in the past decade, he was a star player on the team that got it exactly wrong.

It's not just Gensler, of course: many on the Obama economic team, most notably Summers, director of the National Economic Council, facilitated the creation of the bubble economy and the deregulatory mayhem that brought us to this moment. Indeed, Summers, who has consolidated his power in the White House to the point that the press refers to him as Obama's "chief economic adviser," was a proponent of policies—from the lifting of capital controls in developing economies to the repeal of Glass-Steagall—that proved spectacularly misguided.

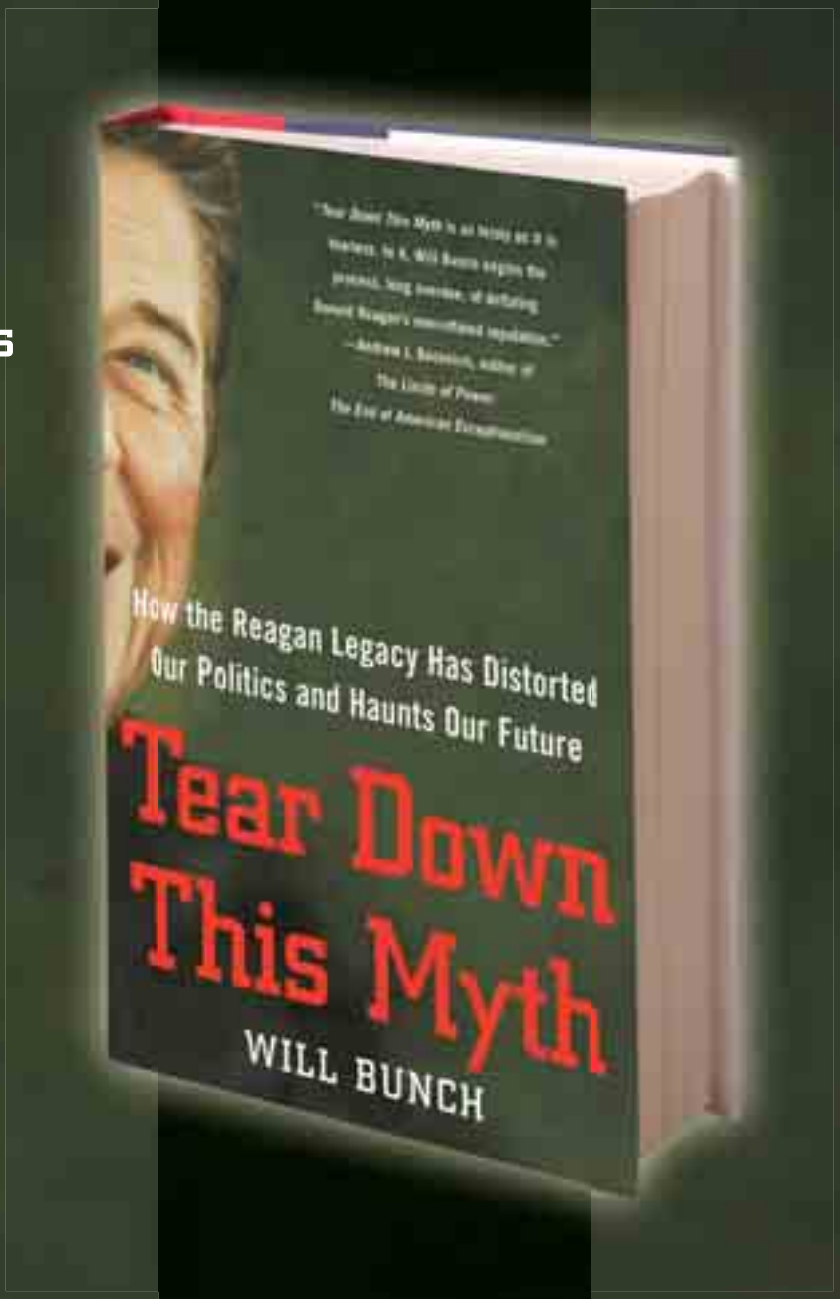
So one might ask: why do these people keep getting plum jobs? Two reasons. The first is a simple rule about Washington, which is that membership in the establishment comes with lifetime tenure. Working inside the Beltway means never having to say you're sorry. If Henry Kissinger, international man of mystery cum war criminal, can flit around Washington and be fondly invoked in presidential debates as a sage of foreign relations—well then, everyone else, no matter what they've done, can as well.

The second reason might be called the Gus Frerotte Principle. Frerotte is a 37-year-old NFL quarterback who played

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There they go again. . .

The right-wing noise machine has hoped to dominate our future by reinventing the past. Now, Will Bunch punctures their photo-op mythology and reveals the *real* legacy of Ronald Reagan.



"*Tear Down This Myth* is as feisty as it is fearless. . . . Bunch begins the process, long overdue, of deflating Ronald Reagan's overinflated reputation."

—Andrew J. Bacevich, author of *The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism*

"The myth that Ronald Reagan was loved by everybody all the time is one of the greatest PR swindles of the age. This is a must-read for all who cherish truth in history."

—Rick Perlstein, author of *Nixonland*

FREE PRESS
A Division of Simon & Schuster
A CBS COMPANY

www.simonandschuster.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

most recently for the Minnesota Vikings. For most of his career he's been a middling QB. Yet he's managed to last fifteen years in the NFL, playing for seven different teams. This year he landed the starting job with the Vikings. Frerotte's not alone. There's an entire class of journeymen NFL quarterbacks who despite never quite excelling manage to hang around the league for years getting job after job on team after team. Though this often causes fans to throw up their hands in frustration ("This guy again!"), the reason is fairly straightforward. Being an NFL quarterback is an exceedingly difficult, complicated job, with a very steep learning curve. When a coach is deciding between a known quantity like Frerotte and some promising but untested newcomer, the incentives all push toward Frerotte.

Which brings us to Gensler. Running a regulatory body like the CFTC, like helming a pro football team, is complicated and difficult. So it's not surprising, particularly during a crisis, that there's a strong bias toward those like Gensler, Summers et al., who are "game tested." Of course, it would be far preferable to go with someone game-tested who got it right the first time—like Born. That said, having gotten things wrong in the past shouldn't necessarily be disqualifying. (Though according to one Senate aide who met with Gensler, he never offered a simple "my bad" about his role in the derivatives debacle—even behind closed doors.) Indeed, longtime journeyman Kerry Collins, whose career was not unlike Frerotte's, took the starting job on the Tennessee Titans this year and led the team to thirteen wins while making the Pro Bowl. The lesson: times change, and people sometimes learn from their mistakes.

But as the Obama administration continues to fill thousands of government positions, they'd do well to heed the words of a wise man who once said that "tallying up your years in Washington is no substitute for judgment." That was President Obama, whose primary campaign was largely predicated on the principle that having gotten something crucial, like the Iraq War, right when other people got it wrong was of such overwhelming importance that voters should elevate someone who'd been a state senator just a few years earlier to the highest office in the land over a competitor with years in Washington under her belt.

The voters agreed, and I continue to think they got it right. Maybe the president should go back and read some of his old speeches the next time there's an opening in his administration.

CHRISTOPHER HAYES

The Mitchell Moment

COMMENT

Hope is a rare commodity in the Israel-Palestine conflict, with Israel's devastating three-week war on Gaza seeming to banish it from the region altogether. The attack has only managed to heighten support for Hamas among Palestinians and throughout the Arab and Muslim world, with a corresponding plunge in the status of the Palestinian Authority's Mahmoud Abbas, along with the United States and its allies in the region. And by most forecasts, the upcoming Israeli elections will bring back to power Benjamin Netanyahu, who dedicated his first term as prime minister to destroying the Oslo peace process; he now calls for escalation of the war against Hamas, and by extension all Palestinians, and refuses to consider any withdrawal from the illegally occupied territories.

Barack Obama's appointment of former Senator George Mitchell as Middle East envoy was received as a welcome ray of sunlight by many who desire a just resolution of the conflict, from liberal Jewish lobbies like J Street and the Israel Policy Forum to Arab leaders around the world. And with good reason: Mitchell is widely recognized as a key player in forging the 1998 Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland. As President Clinton's special envoy, Mitchell persevered through years of bitter, often despairing negotiations between hardened enemies before emerging with a settlement—one that holds to this day. One of the keys to his success was that he was considered a scrupulously impartial broker by all sides. Among the useful lessons from the GFA, Mitchell has argued, is that all parties to such conflicts need to be included, even those associated with violence, and that preconditions, especially those related to ideological goals, "ought to be kept to an absolute minimum."

Mitchell has also received praise for his leadership of a commission established in 2000 to analyze the causes of the intifada that had broken out that fall. The Mitchell report, released in 2001, was cautious but scrupulously evenhanded, condemning Palestinian terrorism but also Israel's disproportionate use of force, most of it against unarmed demonstrators. It also criticized Israeli settlement expansion, which had enraged Palestinians and undermined the Oslo talks. Most crucially, the report refuted claims, then widespread in the US media, that the intifada had been cooked up by the Palestinian Authority.

The fate of Mitchell's new mission depends in good part on President Obama. Will the president have the courage to allow Mitchell to apply the lessons learned from his experience in high-stakes conflict resolution? Will both be able to withstand the powerful pressure of those on the right who condemned Mitchell's appointment because, as Abraham Foxman of the Anti-Defamation League put it with astounding candor, "Mitchell is fair. He's been meticulously even-handed. But the fact is, American policy in the Middle East hasn't been even-handed. It has been supportive of Israel when it felt Israel needed critical US support. So I'm concerned. I'm not sure the situation requires that kind of approach."

If Mitchell is allowed to do his job, he might acknowledge that, whatever one thinks of Hamas's ideology, it is a democratically elected representative of the Palestinian people and thus needs to be engaged—just as Sinn Fein (and indirectly, the IRA) was in Northern Ireland. He'll recognize that while Palestinian terror is unacceptable, so too is the gigantic Israeli settlement enterprise, which has been stealing land and violating international law for decades. He'll condemn not only Hamas's rocket attacks but also the Israeli army's staggering levels of violence, using the most advanced US-supplied weaponry against heavily populated civilian areas, as well as Israel's closures, checkpoints and separation wall, which have destroyed the Palestinian economy, stoking the despair that leads to extremism.

Obama's selection of George Mitchell was an inspired choice. James Zogby, president of the Arab American Institute, recently said, "When I read the Irish peace plan, I remember thinking, Would that someone could do this for the Middle East." Obama has found the man for the job. Now Mitchell should be allowed to do it.

ROANE CAREY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Eric Alterman

The Defamation League

To delve deeply almost anywhere into the arguments over the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is to invite an overload of irony, but let us focus for one moment on a fracas caused by Abe Foxman, national director of the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League. Irony No. 1 is that a "league," as such, does not exist. Foxman is it. (When asked, for a *New York Times* profile, whom in the organization besides himself a reporter might interview, Foxman "couldn't think of anyone.") Irony No. 2? Under Foxman, "antidefamation" is not really the ADL's line; defamation is.

Take, for example, Foxman's recent attack on Bill Moyers (a longstanding friend and occasional supporter of my work). When Moyers broadcast a less than laudatory commentary about Israel's Gaza invasion, Foxman accused the veteran journalist and liberal icon of—I kid you not—"moral equivalency, racism, historical revisionism, and indifference to terrorism." (You can read it online at pbs.org/moyers/journal/blog/2009/01/exchange_between_billmoyers_a.html, together with Moyers's response.) The incident says far more about Foxman than Moyers. As M.J. Rosenberg of the Israel Policy Forum observed, Moyers "is one of the most admired figures in America. This attack will harm not at all. It will, in fact, enhance his reputation just as Ed Murrow's was enhanced by the attacks on him during the McCarthy era." Still, it is demonstrative of the maximalist Manichaean mindset that characterizes so much of American Jewish officialdom. Among Moyers's myriad sins, says Foxman, was his "ignorance of the terrorist threat against Israel, claiming that checkpoints, the security fence, and the Gaza operation are tactics of humiliation rather than counter-terrorism." Now really: is it so hard to imagine that the checkpoints, security fence and Gaza operations are tactics of both humiliation *and* counter-terrorism? Where, exactly, would be the contradiction?

But for the likes of Foxman, any action Israel takes is de facto defensive and solely in the interests of peace, no matter how warlike. He goes so far as to attack Barack Obama's choice of former Senator George Mitchell as the US envoy to the region because—get this—Mitchell is "fair" and "meticulously even-handed," and Foxman says he is "not sure the situation requires that kind of approach." Foxman's moral compass has gotten so twisted, he has the ADL working to undermine Congressional resolutions condemning genocide—specifically, that committed by Turks against the Armenians. Foxman does not dispute that genocide took place; rather, he argues that it would be inconvenient for Turkish (and Israeli) Jews were Congress to take note of it. So we have reached a point where an organization founded by Jews in 1913 to "secure justice and fair treatment to all citizens alike" is now in the business of defaming those with whom its director disagrees and purposely turning a blind eye to genocide. In light of the desire of so many anti-Semites to treat the Holocaust in a similar fashion, Foxman's position strikes this Jew at least as one too many ironies to be tolerated.

What's more, the defamation of Moyers escalated further. Following Foxman's fusillade, *New York Times* neocon William Kristol inserted in a regular column—yet another devoted as usual to the majesty of George W. Bush's leadership—an attack on Moyers for allegedly "lambast[ing] Israel for what he called its 'state terrorism,' its 'waging war on an entire population' in Gaza." Like Foxman, Kristol also implied that Moyers was guilty of racism.

Again, read the text of Moyers's remarks. Neither Kristol nor Foxman notes his stated belief that "every nation has the right to defend its people. Israel is no exception, all the more so because Hamas would like to see every Jew in Israel dead," or his deep concern about the growth of "a radical stream of Islam [that] now seeks to eliminate Israel from the face of the earth." Yet despite the fact that Bill Moyers is, well, Bill Moyers, the *Times* editors not only allowed Kristol to deliberately distort and decontextualize his remarks; they would not allow Moyers to defend himself in his own words in response. After the PBS journalist submitted a letter to the editor, he was told, "We will not print that 'William Kristol distorts or misrepresents,' and the editors will not budge." They insisted that the letter be changed for publication to read, "I take strong exception to William Kristol's characterization," and they truncated much else.

This is pathetic and ridiculous. If one were to survey, say, 1,000 journalists or even 1,000 *New York Times* readers and ask them whether they were more likely to trust the judgment, honesty or bravery of Bill Moyers or of William Kristol, my guess is that the result would be a landslide victory in Moyers's favor that would dwarf that of Barack Obama's over John McCain. I'd even bet the same would be true in a private survey of *Times* editors. Yet publisher Arthur Sulzberger Jr. and editorial page editor Andrew Rosenthal—rather than admit their colossal mistake in giving so prestigious and influential a perch to Kristol, who was at long last ushered off the page with his next column just one week later—instead chose to empower his McCarthyite slanders against one of America's most distinguished patriots and practitioners of their profession.

Writing in the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz*, the celebrated author and patriot David Grossman termed the Gaza operation "just one more way-station on a road paved with fire, violence and hatred," and added, "our conduct here in this region has, for a long time, been flawed, immoral and unwise."

When Foxman and Kristol have the guts to go after Grossman—who, after all, lost his son two years ago in a war both men supported from the comfort of their armchairs—then perhaps we might take seriously their complaints about the relatively moderate sentiments expressed by Moyers. Until then, I fear, we must chalk up their ideological fanaticism and their moral and intellectual confusion as yet another casualty of this endlessly destructive conflict. ■

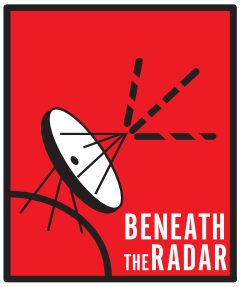
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Gary Younge

Beyond Hope

When I was a union organizer in my workplace in London a colleague came up to my desk with a petition and said something about getting things moving. Reflexively, I signed it (I knew him to be a smart, progressive guy, and if this thing was of concern to him, then I wanted to lend my support), only to look up and see that he had walked off without waiting to collect it. Before chasing him down the corridor, I took the trouble to read what I had put my name to. It was a demand that the union stop dragging its feet on a particular issue and mount an effective challenge to management. In other words, it was not for me to sign but to receive. I had in effect signed a petition against myself.

The transfer from protest to power is not an easy one, particularly for the left. We live in a state of dissidence, which makes the notion that we might one day take over the state apparatus—or indeed any apparatus—all the more difficult. That does not necessarily make us oppositional by nature—though some are—but we are antagonistic by temperament. Our work is never done. If it were, we would no longer need a left. Unaccustomed as we are to office and power, we are more likely to sign than to receive.



So it is that even as Obama settles in to the Oval Office, with the full might of the wealthiest and most powerful state in the world at his disposal, many of his supporters still consider him the underdog. Having made this unlikely journey happen, they want to keep traveling in the style to which they have become accustomed even after they have reached the terminus. They wear buttons and display posters that demand that we "Hope" and "Believe," even as what they hoped for has happened and what once seemed incredible is now real.

But it's time to let that new reality sink in. The transition is over. We have moved from aspiration to destination. Obama has arrived. Tempting though it may be to savor the lingering aftertaste of a sweet, sweet victory, progressives need to take the posters down and the buttons off. These are no longer the emblems of resistance but of power.

A movement that does not champion the cause of the powerless has no right to call itself progressive. And a movement that attaches itself unequivocally to power does not have the credibility or wherewithal to call itself progressive. That distinction is of course much easier in times when those in power attack us and our values with impunity. But it is no less necessary when they don't.

Our support for Obama has always been (or should always have been) contingent, as opposed to unconditional. That does not necessarily mean an antagonistic relationship but at the very least an independent one. So to remove his likeness from our walls, hats, chests and homes signals not a souring of the relationship between progressives and Obama but a maturing of it. For many this will be difficult. Obamaphilia has always been a wild beast in desperate need of taming. He already has a school named after him in New York as well as a couple of streets in Florida and Missouri. Most presidents have to be dead—or at least no longer serving—before they get that kind of treatment. All of this happened before Obama had even taken the oath.

The Obama signs, in all their various forms, came to represent a badge of belonging—particularly outside Democratic strongholds. In the small town of Roanoke in conservative southwest Virginia, where I spent much of the campaign, an Obama poster on a popcorn machine in an ice cream and soda store was the sign for some patrons that they could talk freely about their support for him without being harangued. It signaled that, regardless of Fox News talking points your family members, fellow parishioners or colleagues might have been spouting, there was a world out there in which you were not entirely crazy and your values had some value.

To some, bearing the sign marks a form of premature nostalgia for the days when all they dared do was hope. There is a place for that. But as Shepard Fairey's iconic poster of Obama goes up in the National Portrait Gallery, that place is rightfully in a museum. Along with the buttons calling to Free Angela Davis or Nelson Mandela, posters for the Poor People's March or placards to defend the Rosenbergs, they are important pieces of the nation's liberal history because they illustrate an important moment. But that moment has passed.

The T-shirts and buttons served as a shorthand for a makeshift progressive community that gathered around a candidate. That community—or at least that desire for community—still exists. But the moment it gathers around a president, it ceases to be progressive.

Needless to say, Obama is eager to keep this relationship going as long as he can. Since the election, the administration has attempted to reinvigorate the campaign it erected and mobilize it into a fighting force. It seems like every other day I get an e-mail from David Plouffe asking me to take to the streets to back the new regime. Since the left has not managed to harness the energy unleashed by the campaign, we can hardly blame Obama for this. But when the government is organizing a movement to back the government in the name of progressive politics, something is seriously awry.

If these arguments fail, just pause a second and contemplate how it looks. If you're going to wander around bearing the image of your president, you might as well be a North Korean on your way to interview for a government job. What would you have called someone with a George Bush hat or button in February 2005? I rest my case. The bottom line is, it's not cool. With his slender frame, stoic manner and understated suits, Obama has redefined cool. So on a sartorial basis alone you owe it to him to dial back. If you can't do it in the name of progressive politics, at least do it for the president. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DOING THE RECOVERY RIGHT

How to stimulate the economy, protect the environment and promote justice at the same time.

by ROBERT POLLIN

For most of the past generation, the aims of environmental sustainability and social justice were seen as equally worthy, yet painfully and unavoidably in conflict. Tree huggers and spotted owls were pitted against loggers and hard hats. Fighting global warming was held to inevitably worsen global poverty and vice versa. Indeed, the competing demands of the environmental and social justice agendas were frequently cited as a classic example of how public policy choices were fraught with trade-offs and unintended consequences—how you could end up doing harm while seeking only to do good.

Over the past couple of years, there has been a dramatic reversal of thinking: the idea has emerged that protecting the environment—in particular, defeating global warming—can also be an effective engine of economic growth, job creation and even poverty reduction. A small band of determined activist organizations, including the Apollo Alliance, Green For All and 1Sky, deserve credit for pushing this idea into the mainstream. Labor and environmental organizations like the Steelworkers and the Natural Resources Defense Council were open to persuasion. By the time the presidential campaign began, Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama had both incorporated variations on this idea as major planks in their platforms.

Now, under President Obama, the idea of a green recovery—an investment program to promote energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy—is a central feature of his $825 billion program to defeat the most severe financial crash and recession since the 1930s.

Of course, arguments about trade-offs and unintended consequences have not disappeared. Robert Stavins, chair of the Environment and Natural Resources Faculty Group at Harvard, recently offered this analogy: "Let's say I want to have a dinner party. It's important that I cook dinner, and I'd also like to take a shower before the guests arrive. You might think, Well, it would be really efficient for me to cook dinner in the shower. But it turns out that if I try that I'm not going to get very clean and it's not going to be a very good dinner."

A weighty intellectual pedigree does undergird the Stavins story. This is a proposition developed by Jan Tinbergen, co-recipient of the first Nobel Prize in Economics and a lifelong leftist. Tinbergen held that you need separate policy tools to address distinct policy aims—that, in other words, trying to kill two birds with one stone is not likely to succeed. As the Obama administration begins spending in the range of $150 billion to create jobs and fight global warming through a single tool of green investments, it is clearly an appropriate time to examine how much Tinbergen's law might actually apply to our current situation.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What Is the Green Investment Agenda?

The transformation of our fossil fuel driven economy into a clean energy economy will be the work of a generation, engaging a huge range of people and activities. But focusing on essentials, there are only three interrelated projects that will drive the entire enterprise: dramatically increasing energy efficiency; equally dramatically lowering the cost of supplying energy from such renewable sources as solar, wind and geothermal power; and mandating limits and raising prices on the burning of oil, coal and natural gas.

In the preliminary version of the stimulus program drafted by House Democrats in mid-January, the green recovery components of the overall $825 billion measure include about $45 billion for retrofitting buildings to increase their energy efficiency significantly; $20 billion to upgrade the public transportation system; $32 billion for building "smart grid" electrical transmissions systems that can, among other things, efficiently use power from renewable sources; and $8 billion for renewable energy research and commercialization (allowing that the exact allocations for various purposes are not yet entirely clear).

The piece that's missing is some mechanism for limiting the burning of fossil fuels. One option is to raise taxes on purchasing oil, coal and natural gas. Congress has also considered "cap and trade" proposals for the past few years, which would set increasing limits on total carbon emissions and require corporations to pay the government for rights to produce fossil fuels. A significant bloc in Congress, including some liberal Democrats like Senator Sherrod Brown of Ohio, has opposed such measures because they would impose higher energy prices on businesses and individuals. But some version of this proposal will have to be implemented—if not amid the recession itself, soon thereafter—to advance a successful environmental agenda.

Success in combining the three projects—energy efficiency, renewable energy and limits on fossil fuel consumption—could produce a decisive environmental victory. It could also serve social justice in several ways, by lessening the risks of extreme weather patterns like Hurricane Katrina, allowing us to breathe clean air and breaking our dependence on oil companies and foreign oil oligarchies. But these achievements still do not tell us how a green investment project could also advance a broader social justice agenda, to promote good jobs and economic security, and to fight poverty. Are these connections real?

Green Investments and Full Employment

First and foremost, the green investment project is a social justice agenda to the degree it promotes full employment at decent wages. For a generation coming out of the Great Depression, the goal of full employment was the moral centerpiece of economic policy around the world. But full employment has been off the radar screen since the elections of Margaret Thatcher in 1979 and Ronald Reagan in 1980. It has been easy to forget its transformative power as a policy goal.

Whether you can get a job—and if so, whether the job offers decent pay, a clean and safe environment and fair treatment for you and your co-workers—matters a lot to almost everyone. Correspondingly, unemployment can have a devastating impact on families, even with two wage earners. A full employment economy also means greater business opportunities for small and large firms and strong incentives for private businesses to increase their level of investment.

Since World War II, the closest we have come to full employment was in the late 1960s and late 1990s to 2000, when the unemployment rate fell to 4 percent and below. In both periods, low unemployment increased workers' bargaining power, which brought rising wages. Poverty fell as businesses were forced to hire people who had been left out. But in the 1960s the engine of employment expansion was spending on Vietnam, an immoral war. In the 1990s to 2000 job growth was driven by the irrational Wall Street dot-com frenzy. By contrast, a green investment program can underwrite a durable full employment economy precisely because it is environmentally sustainable and morally just.

The green investment project can advance a full employment agenda because it will create about seventeen jobs for every $1 million in outlays, whereas spending the same $1 million in the oil and coal industries creates about 5.5 jobs—i.e., the job-creation effect of green investments is more than three times larger than that for fossil fuel production. The main reasons for this disparity have nothing to do with whether the investments are green. Rather, there are two primary factors at play. The first is the higher "labor intensity" of spending on green projects—more money is spent on hiring people and less on machines, supplies and consuming energy. This becomes obvious if we imagine hiring construction workers to retrofit buildings or install solar panels, or bus drivers to expand public transportation offerings, as opposed to drilling for oil off the coasts of Florida, California and Alaska. The second factor is the "domestic content" of spending—how much money is staying within the US economy as opposed to buying imports or spending abroad. When we retrofit public buildings and private homes to raise their energy efficiency, or improve our public transportation systems, virtually every dollar is spent within the US economy. By contrast, only 80 cents of every dollar spent in the oil industry remains in the United States.

As a tool for fighting the recession, the green recovery project has as its first purpose injecting more money into the economy as quickly as possible. In this way, a $100 billion green investment program would create on the order of 1.7 million new jobs.

Over the longer term, though, the green investment agenda will not simply entail expansion in energy efficiency and renewable investment spending but also a corresponding decline in spending on oil, coal and natural gas. Yet this longer-term agenda can still promote a full employment economy. If we allow that every $1 million in new green investments will be matched by an equal fall in spending within the fossil fuel industry, we will still net about 11.5 jobs each time $1 million transfers from fossil fuels to clean energy (i.e., seventeen jobs for green investments minus 5.5 lost in oil, natural gas and coal). We spend about $600 billion a year in the oil, natural gas and coal sectors. Transferring, for example, 25 percent of

Robert Pollin, a professor of economics and co-director of the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts, is co-author of Green Recovery: A Program to Create Good Jobs and Start Building a Low-Carbon Economy.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

those funds into energy efficiency and renewable energy projects would therefore yield about 1.7 million new jobs.

The importance of pursuing this agenda is underscored by the long-term effects of globalization on the US labor market. Over time, globalization is making more and more US jobs vulnerable to outsourcing to low-wage economies. In a widely discussed article in *Foreign Affairs* in 2006, Princeton economist Alan Blinder argued that increasingly services that can be carried over the Internet—including the telephone operators in India with whom we are familiar, but also back-office accountants, lawyers, engineers and laboratory technicians as well as their support staffs—can be supplied by employees in poor countries who work for, say, one-fifth the wages of their US counterparts. These would be in addition to the manufacturing jobs that have long been forced to compete with China and other low-wage countries. Blinder's conclusion is that something like 20 to 30 percent of all US jobs—in the range of 30 million to 40 million in all—are vulnerable to these out-

The Power of Transparency

Although the details of President Obama's American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan remain in negotiations, one issue is not debatable: accountability. Drawing from state and local precedents, Obama can ensure that his plan remains untainted by corruption and waste. Accountability—especially web-based transparency—is both good policy and necessary politics.

First and foremost, as Obama has pledged, the recovery plan should offer web-based disclosure of where the money is going and what taxpayers are getting in return. Every state discloses its contracting online to some degree, and half the states also disclose some company-specific data on their economic development and job-creation subsidies. It's a consensus, good "Google government" idea that has even been jointly embraced by Ralph Nader and Grover Norquist.

Thanks to the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (which then-Senator Obama co-sponsored), there is already a federal disclosure website, usaspending.gov, upon which to build. However, the Recovery and Reinvestment Plan needs to provide deeper disclosure; currently, it lists the source, value and primary recipient (public agencies or private companies) of funds. Missing are the identities of subcontractors (who often do most of the work), subgrantees or the names of companies that benefit from various economic development subsidies.

The usaspending.gov platform needs to report on benefits as well as costs. That is, expected and actual outcomes, especially jobs: how many are promised and how many are actually created, and at what wage and benefit levels? What are the demographics of the new hires, and which neighborhoods are getting the jobs? By requiring monthly data updates from the states and localities that are receiving federal funds, the Obama administration can use the power of the purse to enforce compliance: no data, no check for the next installment. Being able to track issues like job quality matters greatly: if taxpayers are subsidizing poverty-wage jobs that leave working families in need of social safety net programs, the plan could create hidden taxpayer costs.

To avoid such hidden costs, job quality standards—used to some extent by almost every state and most big cities in development deals—are critical. They are best tied to market rates, such as the average nonmanagement wage in the labor market or the industry (with a living wage floor) plus healthcare and paid leave. Can we really call it a "recovery plan" if public dollars are being used to pull wages down?

A third layer of protection against waste are clawbacks, or recapture rules, which are standard operating procedure at the state and local level, especially for big development projects. These are money-back safeguards that say: within an agreed-upon time frame, a recipient must create the promised jobs at the projected pay and benefit levels or else pay the money back, usually on a prorated basis (e.g., a 10 percent clawback on a 10 percent job shortfall). The money can then be redeployed to create jobs elsewhere.

These common-sense reforms—disclosure, job quality standards and clawbacks—have been used by states and cities for years. Despite fearmongering by conservatives, there is no evidence they have harmed anyone's "business climate." Indeed, at meetings of development professionals, they are acknowledged as standard necessities, even touted as best practices.

Yet a recent analysis at the federal level of five commonly used programs in five different cabinet agencies found these safeguards mostly lacking. Not one of the programs, for example, provides wage or healthcare standards for permanent jobs created. Three fail to provide a way for taxpayers to claw monies back if a company fails to deliver on jobs. And although all the programs are covered by some form of crude online disclosure, only two provide data about projected jobs, and none report on jobs created.

We can do better. Using pocket change from Recovery Plan funds, Obama's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) can create online software for monthly data reporting. The program would be consistent with usaspending.gov but also provide deeper tracking of where money flows and report on outcomes.

OMB would use this software to receive and post the data from recipients of federal funds. It would also give the software to states and cities, requiring them to use it to collect monthly outcome data from subgrantees, subcontractors and subsidy recipients. States and cities would then submit the data electronically to OMB, ready to be uploaded and posted online.

It is often said of the New Deal that much of it was hardly new at all, that states had pioneered social safety net programs and labor-market reforms. It's time once again for "policy trickle-up." Obama can borrow these best practices from states and cities, praising their wisdom while installing a system that is his best bet for keeping governors and mayors from frittering away his Recovery Plan. GREG LEROY

Greg LeRoy directs Good Jobs First (goodjobsfirst.org), where he co-wrote "Uncle Sam's Rusty Toolkit."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOBODY OWNS THE NATION.

Not GE. Not Disney. Not Murdoch or Time Warner. We are a wholly owned subsidiary of our own conscience.

This independence is why great writers have always used *The Nation* as an Early Warning System—to expose before it's too late the frauds, felonies and follies of the all–too–private enterprise we call Our Government.

And it's why week in, week out we're read by an audience as illustrious as our authors.

If you believe, as our readers do, that the highest form of patriotism is demanding to know exactly what Government's doing in your name, why not sign on today at this very low rate? You can save a lot—not least of which could be your country.

THAT'S WHY SO MANY SOMEBODIES READ IT.

Reverend Jesse Jackson is a longstanding* Nation *reader.

(Legally speaking, of course, everything has an owner, but as a Nation editor once wrote, "it is one of the superb facts about *The Nation* that you can no more 'own' it than you can own the spirit it represents.")

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sourcing pressures. The only way to counter these pressures is for employment creation to be made a centerpiece of our public policy. The green investment agenda cannot fulfill this role on its own, but it can move us a good distance in the right direction.

Devil in the Details

Of course, there will be excellent, good, bad and disastrous ways to execute the particulars of advancing a unified program for green investments and full employment. Among the most important considerations are regional fairness, cushioning the negative impact on workers and communities tied to the fossil fuel industries, and making the best of the opportunities and challenges posed by the construction industry.

Regional equity. Although all regions can gain significantly from this green recovery program, their ability to capture the benefits of specific technologies like solar or wind power varies according to their climate and geography. But all regions are equally capable of making investments to improve energy efficiency dramatically through retrofitting buildings, expanding public transportation systems and increasing the efficiency and stability of the electric grid. Similarly, all areas of the country have renewable energy resources (for example, underground heat for geothermal energy or nonfood agricultural products to generate biomass fuels) and the ability to produce goods and services (research on biofuel refining or even accounting support) that will be demanded during the clean energy transition. Government support for green investment should therefore be allocated on an equitable basis by region; for example, based on a combination of population levels and proportion of GDP.

Fossil fuel jobs and communities. About 3.5 million Americans are either employed in producing oil, natural gas and coal, or their jobs are linked to the traditional energy suppliers. These jobs will obviously dry up as we reduce fossil fuel dependence. Communities tied to these industries—coal-mining towns throughout much of Appalachia and the oil-rich areas of Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Alaska—will obviously be hurt. But it is important to remember that the green investment agenda will create far more jobs overall, including for people now employed in the traditional fossil fuel sectors. Some of these jobs will be in specialized areas, such as installing solar panels and researching new building material technologies. But the vast majority of jobs will be in the same employment areas in which people already work, in every region and state.

Constructing wind farms, for example, creates jobs for sheet metal workers, machinists and truck drivers, among many others. Increasing the energy efficiency of buildings through retrofitting requires roofers, insulators and building inspectors. Expanding mass-transit systems employs civil engineers, electricians and dispatchers. In addition, all these green energy investment strategies engage a normal range of service and support activities—including accountants, lawyers, office clerks, human resources managers, cashiers and retail salespeople. That said, some significant part of the spending on the clean energy transformation will have to be directed to assist the communities that will be most negatively affected by the contraction of the fossil fuel industries.

Construction jobs. Roughly 30 percent of the job creation generated by the green investment agenda will be in the construction industry, although construction accounts for only about 6 percent of US employment. In the short term, construction has been hit severely by the housing bubble collapse, with nearly 900,000 jobs lost since September 2006. The Obama green recovery agenda can bring back most of these jobs.

Construction jobs cannot be outsourced. Retrofitting a home in Maryland can be done only in Maryland. The public transportation in Los Angeles can be upgraded only in Los Angeles. On average, construction jobs pay decently, because unions still have a strong presence in the industry. Construction unions have also frequently created job ladders for those in low-paying entry-level positions. These opportunities for low-level workers in construction are far more favorable than, for example, those facing workers in the restaurant, hotel or nursing fields.

On the other hand, employment in construction has long been dominated by white males. The industry has a history of hiring discrimination against women and racial minorities, and even now, nearly 60 percent of construction jobs are held by white non-Hispanic males. Women who try to enter construction trades also face sexual harassment and work schedules that are not family-friendly. It is essential that the green investment agenda include strong measures to break down the employment barriers in these trades. It would be an important first step for Hilda Solis, Obama's pick for labor secretary, a Hispanic with a strong record of supporting the rights of all working people, to revive the Labor Department's long dormant Federal Contract Compliance programs. If enforced, these measures would go far toward providing women and minorities a fair share of the construction jobs generated by the green investment agenda.

Beyond this, the green investment program cannot be seen as sole driver of a social justice agenda, either as a short-term stimulus or a long-run program for equitable and sustainable economic growth. Two other obvious investment targets are healthcare and educational services (i.e., spending on teachers, administrators, scholarships, hot lunch programs and bus drivers, as opposed to constructing new school buildings). In terms of promoting productivity and public well-being, investments in health and education are at least as important as public transportation and the energy grid. In addition, the employment impact of investing in healthcare is roughly equal to the average for green investments, while educational services investments generate about 40 percent more jobs. Jobs in education and healthcare are also divided much more evenly by gender and race than those in construction (white non-Hispanic males make up only 15 percent of the overall workforce in healthcare and 22 percent in education).

Green Investments Lower Energy Costs

If government policy aims to discourage fossil fuel consumption either through a cap-and-trade mandate or a carbon tax—as it must—this will raise the price of oil, coal and natural gas. However, this does not have to bring a fall in living standards. One simple solution, as proposed by California businessman Peter Barnes and my University of Massachusetts colleague James Boyce, is to rebate the government revenues generated by a carbon tax or the auctioning of cap-and-trade permits back to all energy consumers according to a fair set of principles. The most important aim would be at least to help

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lower-income families to meet the fossil fuel price increases.

Beyond this, the green investment agenda, especially in the area of energy efficiency, should lead to significantly lower energy costs, which will benefit lower-income households. The two basic ways to do this are through improving access to public transportation and increasing the energy efficiency of residential buildings.

Public transportation accounts for an abysmally low share of travel in the United States, even though ridership rose over the past two years, following the oil price spike. As of 2007, automobile travel accounted for 99 percent of transportation spending even for the least well-off 20 percent of households, despite the fact that public transportation is about 60 percent cheaper per mile. The reasons most Americans, including those with less money, do not use public transportation are straightforward: access is bad, off-peak service is limited and transferring is difficult. If the average lower-income household were to increase its public transportation use to just 25 percent of its transportation budget, it would save nearly $500 a year, raising its living standard about 2.4 percent. [For more on the need for public transit investment, see Ben Adler, "Ticket to Ride," page 24.]

In terms of residential energy efficiency, for the average individual family residence, a one-time $2,500 investment in retrofitting—caulking air leaks and windows, improving insulation and buying more efficient appliances—can reduce annual energy consumption by 30 percent. This would produce an average saving in home energy costs of about $900 a year. Of course, low-income families are much more likely to be renters than homeowners. The green residential retrofit program must therefore stipulate ways to pass along the savings to tenants through rent reductions.

Two Birds With One Stone?

In undertaking a project as massive as the one I am outlining—to replace our current fossil fuel driven economy with a clean energy economy and to concurrently establish full employment as a central policy aim—we obviously cannot proceed flippantly. If serious critics are explaining why it cannot be done, we need to be confident we can answer them. If a thinker of the stature of Jan Tinbergen says you cannot—at least most of the time—kill two birds with one stone, we need to consider finding another stone or allowing one of the birds to fly away unscathed. Pursuing complementary large-scale investment programs in healthcare and education, which, among other benefits, will spread the expansion of employment opportunities fairly across gender and racial lines, is one critical example where another stone is surely necessary.

But all sides also need to be open to evidence. The central facts here are irrefutable: spending the same amount of money on building a clean energy economy will create three times more jobs within the United States than would spending on our existing fossil fuel infrastructure. The transformation to a clean energy economy can therefore serve as a major long-term engine of job creation. If managed correctly, it can also become a cornerstone of a long-term full employment program in this country, which in turn will be the most effective tool for moving people out of poverty and into productive working lives. In short, the transition to a clean energy economy has the capacity to merge the aims of environmental protection and social justice to a degree that is unprecedented. It is an opportunity that must not be lost. ■

Help Wanted for Green Jobs

In fits and starts, green jobs are being created—but real growth requires federal intervention.

by LIZA FEATHERSTONE

"I said, 'I see windmills,' and everyone kind of gave me a strange look." Vicky Sloan, a humanities professor at Clinton Community College, which serves a rural region in upstate New York, is describing a "visualization" session with a touchy-feely outside consultant, forced on the faculty several years ago by the administration. The consultant had asked the professors to close their eyes and picture their institution's future. "It was so Dilbert," interjects Sloan's close friend June Foley, a professor who teaches psychology at the college. "It was!" agrees Sloan, who lives off the grid, in a log cabin, with her own power generator. "But when I closed my eyes, that's what I saw."

Less than an hour north of campus, along the Canadian border, real wind turbines perform a slow ballet dance over the snow-covered farmland. The windmills look at once gleamingly futuristic and as if they've always belonged there. The landscape is rapidly darkening on this overcast mid-afternoon in December—another snowstorm is expected—but even the most distant turbines can be seen easily, like guiding beacons. Wind farms have become a symbol of clean energy—feel-good iconography used by every liberal entity from *The Rachel Maddow Show* to Barack Obama's presidential campaign. But here in the Plattsburgh region, they also represent jobs.

Clinton County—part of what is called the North Country—has endured much upheaval in recent years. Plattsburgh Air Force Base—the oldest military post in the nation—closed in 1995 and has been turned into an industrial park, occupied by a mix of biotech, pharmaceutical, engineering and other companies. The area's many small farmers struggle, like small farmers everywhere. Manufacturing jobs have been gradually ebbing. But the North Country is one of the windiest spots in the nation and thus has become a thriving Gold Coast for the wind industry, with five wind farms producing a total of 690 megawatts of clean energy.

Liza Featherstone is a contributing writer to The Nation.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOSE

Presenting the Acoustic Wave® music system II.

Our best one-piece music system.

When we introduced the original Acoustic Wave® music system, *Sound & Vision* said it delivered "possibly the best-reproduced sound many people have ever heard." And the *Oregonian* reported it had "changed the way many Americans listen to music."

Today, the improved Acoustic Wave® music system II builds on our more than 40 years of industry-leading innovation to deliver even better sound. This is the best one-piece music system we've ever made, with sound that rivals large and complicated stereos. There's no stack of equipment. No tangle of wires. Just all-in-one convenience and lifelike sound.

Even better sound than its award-winning predecessor. With recently developed Bose® technologies, our engineers were able to make the acclaimed sound even more natural. We believe you'll appreciate the quality even at volume levels approaching that of a live performance.

Shown in Graphite Gray with optional 5-CD Changer.

Use it where you like. This small system fits almost anywhere. You can move it from room to room, or take it outside. It has what you need to enjoy your music, including a built-in CD player and digital FM/AM tuner. You also can easily connect additional sources like your MP3 player or TV.

Hear it yourself risk free for 30 days. Use our Excitement Guarantee to try it for 30 days. Order now and receive the new Bose Connect Kit for iPod free – a $99 value. The kit makes it easy to play your iPod through the Acoustic Wave® music system II. It includes a remote that controls both the system and key iPod functions, and a dock that recharges your iPod. When you call, ask about making **12 easy payments,** with no interest charges from Bose.* Compare the performance with large, multi-component stereos costing much more. And discover why Bose is the most respected name in sound.

FREE: Our new Connect Kit for iPod when you order by March 31, 2009.

iPod not included.

To order or learn more:

1-800-314-3416, ext. G8427

www.Bose.com/AWMS2

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Phone_____ E-mail (Optional) _____

Mail to: Bose Corp., Dept. DMG MS2T3, The Mountain, Framingham, MA 01701-9168

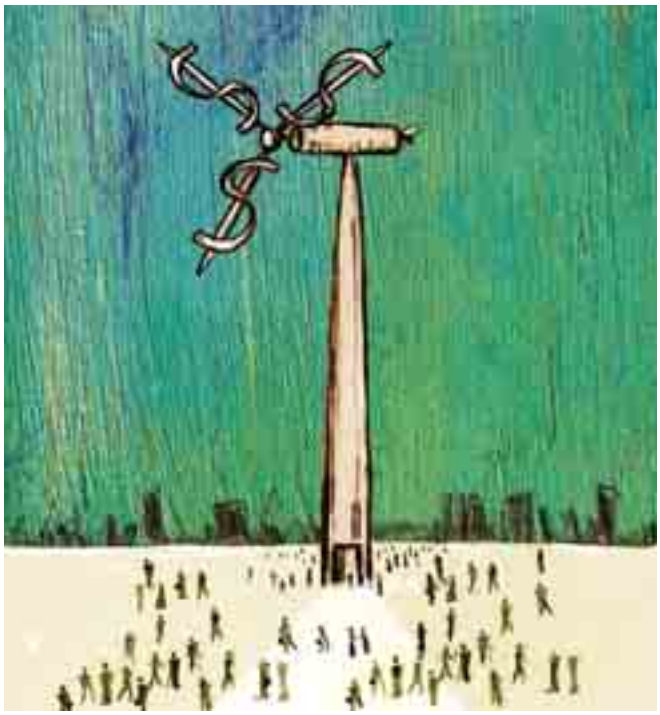
BOSE®
Better sound through research®

IN THE HOME • AROUND THE HOME • AWAY FROM HOME

*Bose payment plan available on orders of $299-$1500 paid by major credit card. Separate financing offers may be available for select products. See website for details. Down payment is 1/12 the product price plus applicable tax and shipping charges, charged when your order is shipped. Then, your credit card will be billed for 11 equal monthly installments beginning approximately one month from the date your order is shipped, with 0% APR and no interest charges from Bose. Credit card rules and interest may apply. U.S. residents only. Limit one active financing program per customer. ©2009 Bose Corporation. Patent rights issued and/or pending. The Acoustic Wave® music system II design is a registered trademark of Bose Corporation. Financing and Connect Kit offers not to be combined with other offers or applied to previous purchases, and subject to change without notice. Bose Connect Kit works with many iPods with a click wheel; call for details. If the Acoustic Wave® music system II is returned, the Connect Kit must be returned for a full refund. Offer is limited to purchases made from Bose and participating authorized dealers. Offer valid 2/1/09-3/31/09. iPod is a trademark of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries. Quotes reprinted with permission: *Sound & Vision*, 3/85; Wayne Thompson, *Oregonian*, 9/10/96.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Like many two-year college teachers—who don't enjoy the salary or prestige that many of their counterparts at four-year colleges do—the faculty at Clinton Community College have long taken seriously their civic duty to prepare students for the best jobs the local economy can offer. While faculty members like Sloan envisioned a role for the college in the region's wind industry, it was Janice Padula, an environmental science professor and hard-working Democratic Party activist, who made it happen. Working with regional economic development officials, the wind industry and relevant technical experts at the college, she established a wind technician training program to prepare students for the wind industry's most permanent jobs: troubleshooting and maintaining the turbines. The program's first students began in January, as Barack Obama took office. The timing couldn't be better: several of the students have arrived fresh from recession trauma, having just been laid off from FedEx or Wyeth Pharmaceuticals.



KAREN CALDICOTT

Windmills are only modest engines of job creation. A 200-megawatt wind farm—a large one—creates about 300 jobs over the course of its construction. Some of these are union jobs, but all are temporary. A wind farm of the same size requires about twenty technicians to operate and to fix the turbines if anything goes wrong. Such jobs, says Charlie Turlinski, a project manager for Horizon Wind Energy, require a good amount of skill. "The technician job can work well for the farmer's son who knows how to take a tractor apart and put it back together," he explains, but it also requires extensive computer and GPS training. Plus, as Sloan points out, "They have to like climbing really tall towers!" (True, and this wouldn't be fun for everyone: the windmills are 265 feet to the "navel," or axis.) Technicians—nonunion, though there is no reason they have to be—will earn an average salary of $50,000 a year over the lifetime of the wind farm, on average being paid $35 per hour: hardly as good as making cars for GM, but much better than working at Wal-Mart.

Wind energy from the North Country reaches New York City on the state's overstressed grid. One of the buildings that buys it is 1400 Fifth Avenue, the city's first green condominium building—still the only one to include affordable housing units (before the recession, green was as trendy in Manhattan luxury buildings as it was on the runway). Built in 2004, 1400 Fifth boasts the largest geothermal residential heating and cooling system in the United States; despite its location in densely populated East Harlem, it is powered by well water.

In this part of New York City, there are almost certainly more Baptist churches than "green jobs," but 1400 Fifth's resident manager, Hector Norat, has one of the few. Norat is obviously proud of the complex skills and exploratory spirit required to maintain the building: "No one understands the geothermal system, not even the engineers who made it up," he observes, "because it is so new!" Norat's union, SEIU Local 32BJ, offers an energy-efficiency training program for building supers, and Norat has taken many of the classes. He's proud not only of the building's small carbon footprint but that it is so much healthier for the residents. He leads me into the hallway and insists that I observe the building's distinct air quality: "I want you to breathe this clean, light air." Like organic family farmers who are relieved that their kids can play outside without eating pesticides, Norat, who lives in the building, relishes raising his two young children in this environment—especially in a neighborhood where the number of child asthma hospitalizations is ten times the national rate.

Though the "win-win" perkiness of the phrase has inspired some media cynicism, "green jobs" is not just a campaign buzzword or a liberal fantasy. Environmentally sound job creation and training is happening right now, all over the country, fueled by the belief that it is possible to solve the climate crisis and put more people to work in better jobs all at the same time. In Sacramento, a costly nuclear plant has been shut down and turned over to solar energy, widely believed to be, among renewable energy industries, the most promising sector for job creation (both in number of jobs and in job quality). As the port in Duluth, Minnesota, has become busier unloading wind turbine parts, more than 100 additional workers have been hired for union jobs paying more than $30 an hour. For the past eight years, such changes have been led by state and local governments, advocated for mainly by groups like the Apollo Alliance, a coalition pushing for a greener economy, and by labor and environmental organizations.

Activists supporting green jobs have been doing so with little help from the government, because the Bush administration had no interest in solving the global warming problem or in economic policy. That meant that the thinking was small: a few hundred jobs, or even ten, and here and there one town shrinks its carbon footprint. Because there was no possibility of a national green jobs policy, no one was thinking systematically about how to remake the economy along greener lines. All that has changed. We now have a president who believes that saving the planet can create jobs. "The election changed everything," says Keith Schneider, a spokesman for the Apollo Alliance, who sees Obama's November victory as the death knell of the fossil fuel dependent,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"drive through" economy. "Now that we—the progressive environmental left—have made our case and won," he says audaciously, "we're in a great race. Does the rise of the new economy beat the decline of the old?"

It's a fine question, as the debate over the economic stimulus package takes place against the backdrop of the burning wreckage of the American auto industry and a national recession. "It's a once-in-a-lifetime investment opportunity," says Bracken Hendricks of the Center for American Progress, one of the authors of its influential report *Green Recovery*. "We're going to spend over a trillion dollars." There's no doubt that Obama will do something to support green jobs, says Kate Gordon, co-director of the Apollo Alliance, but "people need to keep making the case that it needs to be really big."

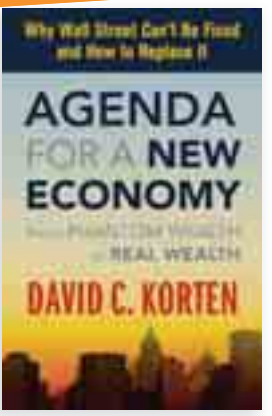
That case keeps getting easier to make. Even before this recession, the economy was desperately in need of jobs that could support a family but didn't require an advanced degree. Rising unemployment—estimated at 13 percent in real terms—makes the case that aggressive government investment in any sort of job creation is urgently needed. And because of the recession, many of the private-sector businesses previously on the cutting edge of the green economy are floundering. Apollo Alliance activists, in conversation and on the group's website, love to highlight a green jobs success story: a factory in Memphis that used to manufacture TVs, back when TVs were made in the United States. That factory now makes solar panels, providing hundreds of unionized jobs—just the sort of story, I thought, that would intrigue and inspire *Nation* readers. Yet when I tried to arrange to visit the plant for this story in late 2008, the company, Sharp Electronics, preferred I stay home; because of the housing bust, business was so slow that there would be no production to see.

Wind companies struggle with the costs of capital in this tough financial environment. They're also affected by anemic state budgets; at the end of 2008 it was uncertain whether New York State would continue to fund its Renewable Portfolio Standard, which guarantees a market for renewable energy by mandating that utilities buy clean energy. (Although Governor Paterson just announced a goal of meeting 45 percent of the state's energy needs through energy efficiency and renewable energy by 2015, no one has figured out the wonky details of how to do this.) Without that policy, its enforcement mechanisms and the guaranteed demand for renewable energy credits it assures, some new ventures become too risky.

"Everyone has had to re-evaluate their projects," says Charlie Turlinski. In this climate Horizon Wind Energy, which operates the nearby Maple Ridge Wind Farm, has postponed construction on its latest North Country project. Turlinski and I drive by the site. Snow falls on the abruptly stilled forklifts. The scene is eerie, like a sudden evacuation. The project has been suspended indefinitely, and that could mean fewer jobs for graduates of Clinton County's wind technician program.

"But for the financial crisis, we might not have this opportunity," says Phil Angelides, chair of Apollo's board and former California state treasurer, referring to the historic possibility of federal investment in green jobs. "But the crisis makes it an uphill slog." Angelides points out, too, that some of the most vital projects being proposed for the stimulus do not depend on the vagaries of the business cycle: mass transit, for example, and revamping the grid for more efficient transmission. Both

The Economy, Ecology, and Recovery

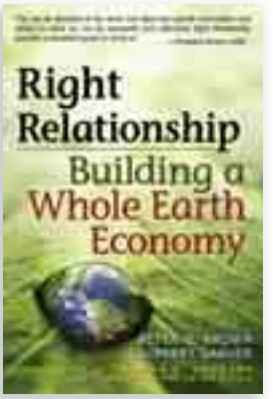


"At last, a book by one of our most brilliant economic thinkers that outlines the real causes of—and solutions to—the current economic crisis!"

—John Perkins, author of *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* and *The Secret History of the American Empire*

By David C. Korten
$14.95 paperback
$10.47 PDF ebook

www.bkconnection.com/agenda



"We are all stewards of the Earth, but often lack specific information and advice on what we can do personally and collectively. *Right Relationship* provides a wonderful guide for all of us."

—President Jimmy Carter

By Peter G. Brown and Geoffrey Garver

$16.95 paperback
$11.87 PDF ebook

www.bkconnection.com/right

"This hopeful book spells out the things that America should have been doing for the past three decades..."

—from the introduction by Robert Kuttner

Features contributions from such leading voices as Van Jones, Dean Baker, Miles Rappaport, and Andrea Batista Schlesinger.

By The Progressive Ideas Network

$9.95 PDF ebook
$14.95 paperback

www.bkconnection.com/thinking

BK® Berrett–Koehler Publishers, Inc.
San Francisco, *www.bkconnection.com*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

could help the green economy in the long run while creating jobs in the short run. The current struggles of private business, says Angelides, make federal intervention all the more urgent: it is clearer than ever that the free market alone will neither revive our economy nor reform it along greener lines.

The recession makes some engines of green development more appealing than usual: those that save money as well as the planet. Energy efficiency is enjoying a tremendous boost, hence billions in the proposed stimulus/recovery for weatherization assistance, which could create thousands of jobs while saving energy costs for businesses and consumers. In addition to the union programs like 32BJ's, innovative city schools like Bronx Community College have also been training workers in this area, which is considered the most promising source of urban green jobs at the moment. Not many spiffy new buildings like 1400 Fifth will be built during this housing bust, but anyone paying for heat should be eager to hire this emerging army of efficiency experts.

The green jobs advocates are just finding their way around a changing Washington. Many are pleased with the proposed appointment of Hilda Solis as the new labor secretary, who as a California Congresswoman was a vocal advocate for green jobs and environmental justice. In mid-January, the Apollo Alliance was meeting with legislators on the Hill, where Green For All founder Van Jones was testifying to urge Congress to make green jobs central in the stimulus/recovery package. The Blue Green Alliance, which is setting up its DC office, will have an intense "advocacy day" in early February.

The question is, When they don't get what they want, who will take to the streets and fight? It's in everyone's interest to create decent jobs while fighting global warming, yet the constituency for a green jobs agenda is not always clear. Until recently, the most organized constituencies on energy issues were the few industries—like petroleum and auto companies—that stand to lose from a cleaner economy. Public enthusiasm for green jobs has evolved: Americans are more aware than ever about global warming, as well as what politicians like to call "energy independence" or "energy security." And growing numbers of Americans could use a job. Still, it is not clear how broadly or easily mobilized these desires are, and who has the capacity to organize people to make a serious green jobs policy happen, if and when Obama decides against doing anything "really big."

The Blue Green Alliance, founded by the Steelworkers and the Sierra Club, has organized town-hall meetings in blue-collar strongholds like Canton, Ohio, and Granite City, Illinois, where steelworkers have been bringing the green jobs case to others in the community. Dave Foster, formerly of the Steelworkers and now executive director of the Blue Green Alliance, describes these campaigns as "neighbor-to-neighbor, person-to-person—making the case that the person who lost their job in a plant in Akron could go back to work tomorrow if we passed a [federal] Renewable Energy Standard." Now that SEIU, the Laborers and the Communications Workers of America have joined the Blue Green Alliance, the coalition represents more than 6 million people. That's a lot of Americans, of course, but with SEIU, the largest of those organizations, in extreme disarray, and the rest of the labor movement occupied with trying to pass the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), the potential could go untapped.

Green jobs represent a great opportunity for the labor movement; if the new jobs are union jobs, labor could gain numbers and clout. This would be a boost to the economy, too, putting money in the pockets of working-class people. Hector Norat's work is demanding, highly skilled and cutting edge, but that's not why he makes such good money (he won't say how much, but his local says superintendents at his level make between $50,000 and $100,000). The reason is old school: his union card. Yet questions of union membership, and even organizing rights, haven't been central to the policy debate over green jobs.

Largely offstage in these discussions about labor advocacy on green jobs is one obvious actor: the United Auto Workers. It's hard to imagine an industry more in need of a green makeover; yet the UAW, following the lead of the automakers, is doing little to push for the kind of federal action that might reinvent the industry along greener lines—and save more of its members' jobs. Having been through steel's bankruptcy wave in 1998, Foster says, he understands what the UAW is going through. "You almost can't think strategically while something like that is going on," he says. "But the world does have a crying need for green transportation."

There's no obvious constituency for green jobs that don't yet exist—but this new economy gathers more supporters the more real it becomes.

"It's hard to develop constituency for something that doesn't exist yet," says the Center for American Progress's Hendricks. This lack of constituency is particularly dire for some of the best green jobs ideas: serious investment in high-speed interstate rail, for example, could provide good jobs, revive small cities whose economies have been devastated by the decline in air travel, and lower carbon emissions by providing an alternative to air and car travel. But no member of Congress is going to lose her job or even see protesters outside her office because she didn't make sure high-speed rail was in the stimulus package.

Yet this, too, becomes another argument for huge investment in green jobs, whether through regulation, investment, tax breaks or training programs: this "new economy" gathers more supporters the more real it becomes. That's because as the green economy grows, more people benefit. In Puerto Rico, where he grew up, and where much of his family still lives, Norat owns ninety acres of windy land, which he is hoping to lease to a wind farm, to provide power for the island and, of course, profits for himself. (In the North Country and other rural areas, such revenues are a major boost to small landowners, mostly farmers, who enjoy substantial rents for hosting wind turbines on their property.) Paradoxically, environmental groups have, so far, kept windmills out of Puerto Rico. "They were worried about the birds flying into the turbines," Norat sighs, rolling his eyes. "Aren't the birds smarter

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Turning the Odds in Your Favor

Probability Has Never Been More Interesting and Accessible Than in These 12 Lectures from The Teaching Company

Every time you buy stock or make plans based on a weather forecast, you are consigning your fate to probability.

What Are the Chances? Probability Made Clear helps you understand the random factors behind almost everything—from the combinations of genes that produced *you* to the high odds that the waiting time at a bus stop will be longer than the average time between buses.

Probability as a Reasoning Tool

Professor Michael Starbird knows the secret of making numbers come alive to nonmathematicians. He picks intriguing, useful, and entertaining examples, with questions such as: When did the most recent common ancestor of all humans live? How much should you pay for a stock option?

After an introduction to the fundamental concepts of probability, you delve into a wealth of applications. Lectures 5 and 6 show that randomness and probability are central to physics and biology. Lecture 7 investigates the world of finance, particularly probabilistic models of stock and option behavior. Lecture 8 explores some unexpected applications of probability, and Lecture 9 examines two famous probability puzzles guaranteed to cause a stir: the birthday problem and the *Let's Make a Deal*™ Monty Hall question.

Finally, Lectures 10 through 12 cover increasingly sophisticated and surprising results of probabilistic reasoning associated with Bayes theorem. The course concludes with probability paradoxes, including the notorious St. Petersburg

$$p \times 5 + (1-p) \times 6 = p \times 7 + (1-p) \times 1$$

$$(1-p) \times 5 = p \times 2$$

$$5 = p \times 7$$

$$p = \frac{5}{7} = 0.714$$

paradox, involving a simple lottery in which the expected value is infinity; something has to be wrong, but can you guess what it is?

About Your Professor

Professor Michael Starbird is a distinguished and highly popular teacher with an uncommon talent for making the wonders of mathematics clear. He is Professor of Mathematics and a Distinguished Teaching Professor at The University of Texas at Austin, where he has received the President's Associates Teaching Award, the Jean Holloway Award for Teaching Excellence, and the Friar Society Centennial Teaching Fellowship.

About The Teaching Company

We review hundreds of top-rated professors from America's best colleges and universities each year. From this extraordinary group we choose only those rated highest by panels of our customers. Fewer than 10% of these world-class scholar-teachers are selected to make The Great Courses®.

We've been doing this since 1990, producing more than 3,000 hours of material in modern and ancient history, philosophy, literature, fine arts, the sciences, and mathematics for intelligent, engaged, adult lifelong learners. If a course is ever less than completely satisfying, you may exchange it for another, or we will refund your money promptly.

Lecture Titles

1. Our Random World—Probability Defined
2. The Nature of Randomness
3. Expected Value—You Can Bet on It
4. Random Thoughts on Random Walks
5. Probability Phenomena of Physics
6. Probability Is in Our Genes
7. Options and Our Financial Future
8. Probability Where We Don't Expect It
9. Probability Surprises
10. Conundrums of Conditional Probability
11. Believe It or Not—Bayesian Probability
12. Probability Everywhere

THE TEACHING COMPANY®
The Joy of Lifelong Learning Every Day™
GREAT PROFESSORS, GREAT COURSES, GREAT VALUE GUARANTEED.™

About Our Sale Price Policy

Why is the sale price for this course so much lower than its standard price? Every course we make goes on sale at least once a year. Producing large quantities of only the sale courses keeps costs down and allows us to pass the savings on to you. This approach also enables us to fill your order immediately: 99% of all orders placed by 2 pm eastern time ship that same day. Order before March 2, 2009, to receive these savings.

SAVE $160!
OFFER GOOD UNTIL MARCH 2, 2009

1-800-TEACH-12 (1-800-832-2412)
Fax: 703-378-3819

Special offer is available online at
www.TEACH12.com/4ntn

The Great Courses®
THE TEACHING COMPANY®
4151 Lafayette Center Drive, Suite 100
Chantilly, VA 20151-1232

Priority Code 33037

Please send me **What Are the Chances? Probability Made Clear**, which consists of twelve 30-minute lectures plus a Course Guidebook.

☐ **DVD $39.95** (std. price $199.95) **SAVE $160!**
plus $5 shipping, processing, and Lifetime Satisfaction Guarantee
Special price for shipping, processing, and Lifetime Satisfaction Guarantee—this offer only.

☐ **Check or Money Order Enclosed**

* Non-U.S. Orders: Additional shipping charges apply. For more details, call us or visit the FAQ page on our website.

** Virginia residents please add 5% sales tax.

Charge my credit card:

☐ VISA ☐ ☐ ☐

ACCOUNT NUMBER EXP. DATE

SIGNATURE

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

MAILING ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

PHONE *(If we have questions regarding your order—required for international orders)*

☐ **FREE CATALOG.** Please send me a free copy of your current catalog (no purchase necessary).

Special offer is available online at www.TEACH12.com/4ntn
Offer Good Through: March 2, 2009

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than that? This is something that is so good for everybody!"

"I don't consider myself a fanatic of green energy," Norat says, his enthusiasm evident in his cautious smile, "because I don't believe in being a fanatic of anything." But he's going to Maine for a family wedding this summer, and he may drive along the Canadian border to see the Clinton County wind farms. "I am crazy about this," he admits, "and I want to get a little more crazy."

The North Country has wind to spare, but New York's rickety grid is at capacity. No new wind farms can be built in Clinton County until Obama delivers on this piece of the "Green New Deal." While the prospects for improving the grid are decent—judging from the most recent stimulus plans—it's one of many examples of how the slowly emerging green economy is in a state of suspension. As stimulus proposals emerge from the president and the House, it's clear that in many ways they already fall far short of what many green jobs advocates have championed. Job-creating, money-saving initiatives—like weatherization assistance for low-income Americans and grid upgrades—will be funded, but these will be, at best, tentative baby steps. Too much money is squandered on tax cuts, and of the dispiriting 14 percent allocated for infrastructure, conventional, old-economy projects like highways have fared much better than mass transit and other green priorities. When Van Jones testified before Congress in January on green jobs, he sympathized with members' efforts: "[You're] sweating over the details of how we can actually beat the recession and global warming at the same time.... And you're going to get a grade from our great-grandchildren. Yes or no. Pass or fail." There's a danger that in the rush to do just about anything to get the economy moving, we'll fumble a rare chance to revolutionize that economy.

As inspiring as it is to have a president who talks the talk on green-collar jobs, it will take an organized movement to ensure that we get, in a phrase popular among renewable-energy advocates, "megawatts, not just megawords." That movement must have the imagination to fight for our great-grandchildren, and for much that doesn't exist yet, with the "selflessness" and creativity that Obama, in his inaugural speech, urged upon the nation. "The state of the economy calls for action, bold and swift, and we will act—not only to create new jobs but to lay a new foundation for growth," President Obama said. "We will harness the sun and the winds and the soil to fuel our cars and run our factories." Let's hope we take his words to heart—and far beyond his modest proposals. ■

Ticket to Ride

Democrats have a historic opportunity to boost mass transit, but will they seize the moment?

by BEN ADLER

There's a lot of talk about the "green jobs" that will emerge through investment in cleaner technologies, but some of the greenest technology already exists. In fact, it predates the automobile: mass transit. Trains, trolleys and buses are a far more energy efficient way of moving people than cars. The greenest jobs of all may be laying track for suburban commuter rail or driving trains along those tracks.

Investing in mass transit would benefit not just the environment but also poor people, many of whom can't afford cars, don't drive and so have been shut out of the new economy, with its service sector employment increasingly available only in suburban office parks. A study by the University of Wisconsin found that 74 percent of African-Americans and 66 percent of Hispanics ages 18 to 24 in Milwaukee County did not have a valid driver's license. As urban theorists like Joel Rogers have noted in their "Emerald Cities" proposal, building mass transit could also strengthen labor, providing a larger base of unionized construction and maintenance jobs.

The greenest way to lift the country out of a deepening recession would be to put people to work building mass-transit infrastructure, which could, in turn, ease the flow of goods and services, help generate economic growth and open economic opportunities to the disadvantaged. With a new president from Chicago and a House Speaker from San Francisco, the time seems ripe for Democrats to take advantage of the dual opportunities this year presents to alter America's transportation infrastructure radically: the upcoming stimulus spending bill and the Surface Transportation Reauthorization, due for renewal by September.

Obama clearly appreciates the importance of combating climate change, and he has spoken of the need to reduce demand for fossil fuels. Unlike Hillary Clinton or John McCain, he refused to endorse the economically nonsensical gas tax holiday during the campaign. "Obama has certainly taken good positions in general," says New York Representative Jerrold Nadler, perhaps the most vocal mass-transit fan in Congress. "He talked about energy, greening the country: all those things lead one to expect that he will be good on transportation."

Obama sent more positive signs early in the transition process when he brought in a cadre of urban-policy veterans, from New York to Chicago to Washington. He also created the first-ever White House Office on Urban Policy. But Obama's pick of Illinois Representative Ray LaHood as transportation secretary disappointed some transit advocates. The Obama transition team's summary press release to reporters mentioned LaHood's efforts to secure highway funds and expanded air service but made no mention of buses or trains. Anyone in Washington can tell you, off the record, that LaHood was simply the token Re-

Ben Adler, an urban leaders fellow at Next American City, is a contributing writer at Politico. *He has also written for* Newsweek, The American Prospect *and* The Washington Monthly.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

publican, chosen for his moderation, genial persona and relationship with Obama and Rahm Emanuel. While his voting record on transportation is good, for a Republican, he has never been outspoken or a leader on the issue.

The $825 billion stimulus package proposed by Congressional Democrats contained only $10 billion for mass transit, compared with $30 billion for roads. Environmental groups were understandably dismayed. "The stimulus as it currently stands doesn't do enough to create green jobs through clean transportation investments, and it doesn't prevent spending from going to unnecessary new roads that increase pollution and oil consumption," said Friends of the Earth. As Dean Baker, an economist at the Center for Economic and Policy Research, put it at a meeting of the Mayor's Innovation Project in DC, "It doesn't make sense to be spending money to retrofit buildings to make them energy efficient but also building highways to create sprawl."

KAREN CALDICOTT

Nonetheless, smart growth and transportation activists still have high hopes that the Obama administration and a Democratic Congress will revitalize mass transit. But institutional stumbling blocks—including generations of federal policy favoring roads and cars; pressure from fiscal conservatives; and the power of auto, oil and highway construction lobbies—may cause them to miss this opportunity.

"The Democratic Party has within it a more fiscally conservative faction that may not have the same priorities on transportation," concedes Nadler. "How influential they will be remains to be seen."

Transportation accounts for 27 percent of America's greenhouse gas emissions and 33 percent of carbon dioxide emissions, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. It's not just because we drive gas guzzlers; it's because we drive so much. Almost 90 percent of trips in the United States are made by private vehicle, compared with 58 percent in Britain. Even if average fuel efficiency increases to thirty-five miles per gallon by 2020, as mandated by law, the corresponding reduction in emissions could be easily wiped out by the increase in vehicle miles traveled. To reduce our contributions to climate change, we must also reduce our driving.

Government regulations and spending priorities have favored driving as the means of moving people and products since the Eisenhower administration and the advent of the Interstate Highway System. More than 80 percent of transit money from gas taxes supports highways and bridges, with the remainder, less than 20 percent, allocated for mass transit. Moreover, federal contributions to highway projects often cover more than 80 percent of the total construction costs, compared with only 50 percent of the typical cost for a transit system. Rail freight, which uses one-third as much energy per mile as trucking to ship a pound of cargo, has no federal funding at all. There is no rail freight across the Hudson River into New York City; virtually all goods have to enter by truck.

Anti-transit biases written into federal regulations make it much more difficult to obtain transit funding than to get highway funding. Under current rules, funding for a mass-transit system is only provided to areas that already have the density to support it. But mass transit works best when it is built in advance of creeping development, as it was in New York City, so that the tallest buildings can be built closest to the transit nodes, where the premium for housing or office and retail space is highest.

It is a self-fulfilling prophecy: if you build highways, inefficient suburban sprawl will develop and, ultimately, so will traffic and the demand for yet more highways. Build mass transit and you see high-density, efficient housing construction and people living without cars. As the high demand for housing in walkable urban environments like Manhattan and San Francisco demonstrates (and as public opinion polls confirm), plenty of Americans want to live in dense urban communities, and their numbers will only grow as the country's demographics shift toward more childless households—less likely than families with children to want detached suburban houses.

The power to redirect the nation's transportation priorities is not found only in the executive branch. To increase funding for public transportation will require Congressional action. Multiple committees in both houses, with their powerful chairs, will have a hand in crafting the Surface Transportation Reauthorization bill. The bill is doubly important because it controls the federal gas tax, which funds transportation; to increase transit funding, Congress will have to increase that gas tax—a hike that has the added benefit of being a disincentive to driving. George W. Bush refused to increase the gasoline tax to keep pace with inflation. So, adjusted for inflation, transportation has been receiving less funding each year. Ideally, Congress will raise the gasoline tax this year as well as open new revenue streams for transportation, since if you fund mass transit sufficiently, driving will eventually decrease and so will gas tax revenues.

But the meat grinder of competing interests on the Hill makes the outcome far from certain. One potential roadblock is Montana Senator Max Baucus, who chairs the all-powerful Senate Finance Committee. Baucus, a relatively big business–friendly Democrat from a conservative rural state, may be un-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

interested in raising the gasoline tax to support a more urban-oriented transportation bill.

Public opinion has been shifting toward mass transit, especially with such volatile gas prices. Transit ridership climbed throughout 2008, even though gas prices dropped in the second half of the year. "The public support for greater funds for transit is very clear in the last few elections," declares Parris Glendening, former governor of Maryland, now president of the Smart Growth Leadership Institute. Initiatives to pay for mass-transit investments have been winning victories across the country, from Seattle to Charlotte. California passed a $10 billion high-speed-rail ballot initiative last year.

But public opinion is not the only pressure Congress will feel. There are groups, from the auto companies to the oil companies to the road-builder lobby, that have an interest in continued subsidies for highway construction rather than investment in mass transit. When asked what his group's priorities for transportation funding are, Jeffrey Solsby, a spokesman for the American Road and Transportation Builders Association, ticked off a wish list of road expansion without a single mention of environmental concerns. "We're not in the global warming or environment business," says Solsby. "We're in the road-building and transportation industry."

For the first time, though, there will be a countervailing pressure group. Mass-transit activists have organized a national coalition of environmental, public health, urban planning, architectural and transportation organizations called Transportation for America. Even once unlikely allies such as the National Association of Realtors have joined, since the unmet demand for walkable, transit-oriented living arrangements means that once the transit links get built, there will be money to be made in building and selling condos next to commuter rail stations.

There was once a time when the auto-industrial complex had virtually unchecked power on Capitol Hill. Charles Wilson, Eisenhower's defense secretary, who had previously run General Motors, infamously declared in his confirmation hearing that there could be no situation where he would be forced to make a decision adverse to GM because "what's good for the country is good for General Motors, and vice versa." But this past fall the Big Three automakers faced backlash on the Hill and in the press for their bailout requests. Like their bottom line, their power is clearly on the wane. Last summer profiteering oil corporations had Democrats talking about a windfall-profits tax. If ever there has been a year when the auto-subsidy interests could be defeated, this would be it.

But people like Jerrold Nadler, who have been fighting in vain for years to get more transit funding, know better than to expect that to happen without a struggle. "Am I optimistic?" asks Nadler. "I don't know yet." ■

Here Comes the Sun

Rooftop solar power is clean, cost competitive—and doesn't need new transmission lines.

by CRAIG D. ROSE

As the Obama administration and Congress search for worthy infrastructure projects to fund as part of the stimulus and economic-recovery package, there is a growing consensus in support of major investment in the renewal and greening of America's electricity grid. Texas oilman T. Boone Pickens's plan for a huge new grid to tap wind energy across the Plains States has attracted the most attention, but the grandest aspiration is for a "national backbone grid," a coast-to-coast project tapping renewable energy sources that would cost hundreds of billions of dollars.

Big electric-transmission projects have developed a potent support base that includes large utility companies as well as many environmentalists, who argue that all means must be pursued to save the planet by reducing the burning of fossil fuels. The presumption is that big new transmission projects are required to reach America's vast renewable resources, from the strong, steady winds of the Midwest to the relentless sun of the Southwestern deserts.

Although massive expansion of the electric grid threatens to despoil the last of America's undeveloped places, some environmentalists mistakenly believe the urgency of dealing with climate change leaves no alternative to large, remotely sited renewable electric-generation facilities and the transmission lines they need to get power to consumers. In fact, there is an alternative: "distributed generation," or smaller solar technology installations on rooftops and near existing transmission lines, or even scaled-down wind farms sited closer to consumers.

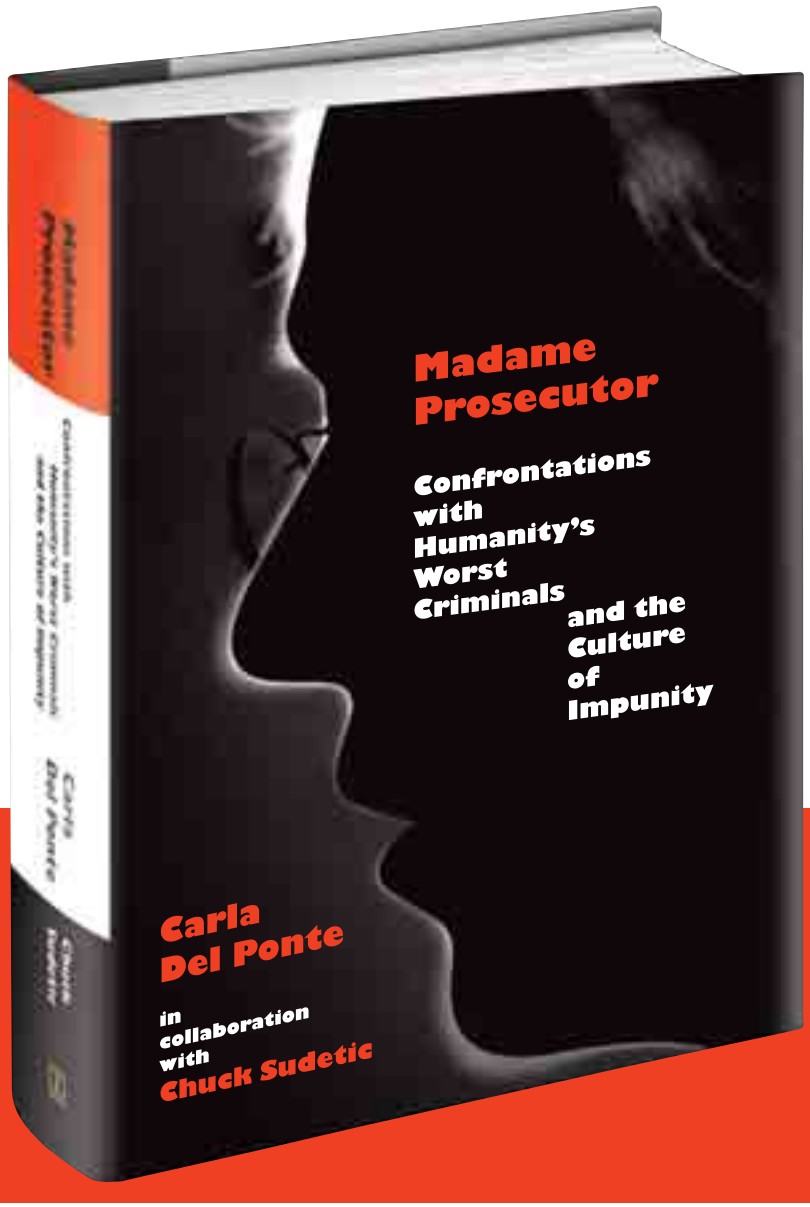
To be sure, the romance of a renewable national grid is classic American thinking: a big problem requires a big solution. But the distributed generation approach (DG in energy lingo) is emerging from advances in solar technology and detailed studies of alternatives to big power-line projects. Consider what happened when Minnesota regulators looked carefully last year at the CapX 2020 project, a proposed cluster of new power lines costing up to $1.7 billion. A key purpose of the lines was to link Minnesota with proposed wind farms in the Dakotas. This is just the type of project favored by Pickens and other supporters of big electric transmission. But after examination the regulators found that Minnesota could develop many small 10–40 megawatt wind farms within the state totaling 600 megawatts—equivalent to a modern power plant—without any new transmission.

"We call it the '600 megawatts for nothing' study," said Mike

Craig D. Rose is a San Diego–based journalist who writes about business and energy.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Justice Must Be Visionary


Madame Prosecutor
Confrontations with Humanity's Worst Criminals and the Culture of Impunity
Carla Del Ponte
in collaboration with
Chuck Sudetic

"[This memoir provides]
the most concrete description to date
of successes and failures in the effort to wrest cooperation from the unwilling and demonstrate that international justice can break the cycle of impunity."
—ARYEH NEIER, president of the Open Society Institute, a founder of Human Rights Watch, and the author of *Taking Liberties: Four Decades in the Struggle for Rights*

From the Sicilian mafia to the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, Carla Del Ponte has earned international recognition for pursuing the fiercest of the world's criminals.

This is the story of her determination and pragmatism, her struggles and her hard-won successes.

"Carla Del Ponte is an intrepid prosecutor who has hounded evildoers to the gates of hell."
—DR. NEIL J. KRESSEL, author of *Mass Hate: The Global Rise of Genocide and Terror*

"The most dogged adversary that Slobodan Milošević, Radovan Karadžić, and other Serb ultra-nationalists faced. With most of them finally behind bars, standing trial, or publicly discredited, Del Ponte has won her long struggle." —DAVID ROHDE, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of the fall of Srebrenica

"A hard-nosed memoir [by the] chief prosecutor for the U.N. International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia and Rwanda, the biggest war crimes prosecution since WWII…
Her implacable quest for justice is admirable." —*Publishers Weekly*

OTHER PRESS **www.otherpress.com**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Michaud, an engineer and consultant who formerly worked with the state regulatory staff. "There was no denying there were twenty spots on the existing grid [where] you could put generation for no cost at all." Michaud added that there is no guarantee the $1.7 billion transmission project would be restricted to clean power—it might in some cases be used to transport power from coal-burning plants.

The DG strategy is particularly applicable to rooftop solar power. It taps existing transmission infrastructure and thus saves the huge cost of building new lines while avoiding the controversy of running power lines through communities. DG also provides the security of dispersed generating resources, so a power failure in one area is far less likely to cause the massive blackouts that can result from the outage of a single unit in the big, centralized power system we have now.

KAREN CALDICOTT

Clean distributed resources in the form of wind, biomass and solar are far more available than is generally known. A November study by the Institute for Local Self-Reliance (ILSR), a thirty-five-year-old group focused on community development, may have been the first to examine the potential for DG on a national scale. The study found that half the states could be energy self-sufficient by harnessing renewables within their borders, and most states can satisfy a considerable fraction of their own energy needs this way.

What's more, encouraging local ownership of distributed resources would solidify local support for the projects and increase the economic benefits, because much more of the spending—and the jobs created—would stay in the community. This is precisely why big utility companies fear advances in rooftop solar technology: it could make every building owner a power generator and leave utilities with long-term prospects similar to those of Detroit automakers or the newspaper industry. "The big utility companies are looking at the future, and they're getting freaked out," said Tyson Slocum, director of Public Citizen's energy program.

Certain areas of the country do have superior renewable resources, such as solar in Nevada and wind in North Dakota. But when the cost of transmission to move that electricity is included—along with the loss of up to 15 percent of the power from moving it long distances—homegrown electricity proves superior. The ILSR study asserts, for example, that if Ohio's electricity came from North Dakota wind farms 1,000 miles away, the cost of constructing lines to transport that power and the losses during transmission would surpass the lower cost of production, resulting in consumer costs 15 percent higher than those from locally generated power.

A similar conclusion was reached by many who studied the Sunrise Powerlink, a planned $2 billion transmission line to move electricity from desert projects 150 miles east of San Diego to the urban area. Proposed by San Diego Gas & Electric, Sunrise won approval in December from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) only after regulators ignored the recommendation of the administrative law judges who oversaw a three-year review. Those judges recommended rejection, concluding that it would be cheaper and better for the environment if SDG&E developed renewable and other projects closer to home.

Despite SDG&E's assertions to the contrary, the judges found that the utility could meet California's strict 20 percent renewable energy standard by the end of next year without the long-distance power line. Only after Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger suddenly created a 33 percent renewable requirement by 2020—one that project opponents never had the opportunity to consider in relation to Sunrise—could regulators find cover for approval. The one vote against: CPUC commissioner Dian Grueneich, who was assigned to oversee the Sunrise case. In a scathing dissent, Grueneich noted that regulators were approving a project ostensibly to develop renewable energy but failed to guarantee that it would do so. In other words, after all the money spent on Sunrise, it could wind up carrying mostly dirty electricity. This contradiction was highlighted when SDG&E—which had insisted the line would be used largely for green power—characterized as unacceptable a requirement that the line carry a fixed percentage of green power. In fact, current federal transmission rules prohibit restricting any transmission project to green energy only, a policy the Obama administration should reconsider if it wants to encourage renewable energy.

A broad community coalition has arisen to oppose the Sunrise project; its legal challenge will likely be based on the CPUC's failure to respect the voluminous factual record established in the case. Among its leaders is Bill Powers, a 52-year-old engineer who has worked on licensing power plants. Powers believes that advances in solar technology—in particular, declining costs that are poised to fall even faster this year—should make development of rooftop solar a top priority. Powers wrote a study that found that the $2 billion SDG&E will spend just to access desert renewable energy could be spent building 1,300 megawatts of photovoltaics (PV) in San Diego—with nearly no cost for transmission lines. And researchers—among them, SDG&E itself—have concluded that San Diego has the potential for some 5,000 megawatts of rooftop photovoltaics, or about enough at peak production to power the entire city on a hot day. "The trump card of urban PV is that there is no lengthy environmental review required and no land

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

requirements," said Powers. "PV goes on rooftops and over parking lots. What is going to slow the plans for big, remote solar and wind projects is what is slowing the Sunrise proposal—citizen opposition. The concept of building remote renewable in most cases is the promotion of investor-owned utilities and their holding companies, who want as much high return on investment transmission projects as possible."

To be sure, many environmentalists insist that saving the planet will require DG *and* remotely located projects. And to some extent, the push for a bigger grid piggybacks on the reasonable call for modernizing the nation's badly decayed grid. President Obama apparently sees upgrades and a major expansion of the grid as a single package, with his call for "a bigger, better, smarter grid" along with "more than 3,000 miles of new or modernized transmission lines." In the practical world, dollars translate into priorities, and money spent on major grid expansion is money unavailable for cheaper and more environmentally friendly DG projects. Case in point: while SDG&E could spend $2 billion for its transmission project, it proposes to spend just $250 million over five years for urban solar projects.

The irony is that SDG&E's parent company, Sempra Energy, has reached what has long been considered a historic milestone in solar energy. Using thin-film photovoltaic panels from First Solar, a fast-growing supplier, Sempra's recently completed 10-megawatt generating plant outside Las Vegas can produce electricity at rates comparable to or below those of fossil fuel fired plants, according to Mark Bachman, a research analyst with Pacific Crest Securities. The use of thin-film technology will be revolutionary, says Powers, and California regulators apparently agree. In a recent study by the CPUC, analysts concluded that DG—in particular, small 20-megawatt installations of thin-film photovoltaics—could satisfy most of California's aggressive target for renewable energy at competitive cost and without new transmission lines. The study emphasized that it was only a test case, based on expected cost reductions for thin-film. But those lower costs have already arrived, Powers noted. "That's what Sempra used to make its breakthrough," he said.

And the breakthrough may well be more than Sempra's. If Sempra and First Solar have crossed the threshold for producing electricity at parity—equal to or less than plants that burn coal or natural gas—it should prompt a drastic recalculation of how we generate power.

Let's call it electricity's wireless future. ■

Newark's Great Green Hope

One of the nation's poorest and dirtiest cities envisions a brighter, cleaner future.

by J. LESTER FEDER

Kim Thompson-Gaddy's three children have asthma, and her godson has irreversible lead poisoning. Sadly, many families face these illnesses in her city, Newark, New Jersey, home to one of the Northeast's largest incinerators and the nation's third-busiest port. With her compelling story and her experience as staff to three city council members in the 1980s and '90s, it is hard to imagine why she has faced an uphill battle in making the city's environmental problems a top priority for the state's environmental organizations and its urban politicians. But her frustration led her to confront the president of the New Jersey Environmental Federation at its first meeting nine years ago: "How can you begin to address our issues if you don't have anyone who looks like us and lives in our community?" she asked. The group took her point and hired her. But when she met with Ronald Rice, her state senator and chair of the Legislative Black Caucus, he laughed her out of the room. "I can't believe you left municipal government to become a tree-hugger!" she remembers him exclaiming.

KAREN CALDICOTT

Today, Thompson-Gaddy's work is paying off. Newark, along with the capital, Trenton, is at the forefront of a new wave of urban environmentalism fueled by the promise of green jobs—the approach to economic recovery favored by America's first urban president in more than a century. Newark Mayor Cory Booker will soon announce that Thompson-Gaddy will chair a new environmental commission, and she headed the economic development working group of a planning process, announced at the 2007 Clinton Global Initiative, to make Newark a model green city. Trenton Mayor Douglas Palmer convened his own green steering committee fourteen months ago and used his position as president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors to place global warming atop the urban agenda. Even the once-derisive Rice has begun to come around and has co-sponsored an environmental bill.

This change was made possible, explains Booker, by the realization that environmentalism is "not about saving something far away like penguins or whales; it's about creating jobs and creating wealth and hope in cities." It also turns some of the cities' greatest liabilities into opportunities. "Our state has a lot of challenges," Booker says. "Urban mayors not only

J. Lester Feder is a freelance journalist based in Washington, DC, covering politics and popular culture. He is a regular contributor to Columbia Journalism Review*'s Campaign Desk and is working on a book about evangelical environmentalism.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

want to avoid facing the consequences of not engaging the green movement. They also see the opportunities of creating a green economy."

These challenges are quantified by heartbreaking numbers, which reveal why solving the economic and ecological crises were long seen as mutually exclusive objectives. In Newark, whose residents are 54 percent black and 32 percent Latino, 30 percent of adults have less than a high school education. (Only 12 percent have post–high school degrees.) Even before the current recession, unemployment hovered above 10 percent, almost twice the state average, and one in six adults has a criminal record, which makes it even harder to find work. A third of Newark's children live in poverty.

The people here live in one of the nation's dirtiest cities—even the power plant, which belongs to the city's medical school, has faced criminal pollution charges. Essex County, home to Newark, is ranked twenty-seventh in the nation on a list of counties with the poorest air quality, and some neighborhoods contain more than 100 toxic sites. This dire situation occurred in large part because polluting industries are the core of Newark's job base. An estimated 150,000 jobs are connected to the port, and one in three workers is employed in transportation, utilities, manufacturing or construction.

Booker says that when all sectors—the port, recreation, even policing—are looked at from a green perspective, "suddenly, it expands our imagination." Fixing the ecological problems becomes an economic opportunity.

Newark is still very much in the imagining stage—it has only rolled out a handful of pilot projects, in partnership with local businesses, labor unions and community organizations. Newark's success in bringing its green vision to life will be measured largely by whether it can provide a pathway out of poverty for someone like Perry McKinney. McKinney is 48 and has a ninth grade education. He has been in state prison three times for crimes including cocaine possession and burglary. After he got out of prison for the last time, in 2000, he finally found a job, doing maintenance work. This brought some brief economic security for the family he supports, which includes his wife, seven children, four foster children and a grandchild, even enabling them to buy a house. But he lost the house and the job when he fell back into his drug habit in 2005. Now his family gets by on food stamps, foster care payments and other public support.

McKinney is one of twenty-five workers who will be part of a six-week Green Jobs Construction Training Initiative launched in January by the City of Newark, the Garden State Alliance for a New Economy and the Laborers International Union's eastern region organizing fund. After being trained in green construction skills, trainees will work on thirty homes belonging to elderly residents on a waiting list for a home-improvement grant program. Organizers hope participants will graduate into jobs doing weatherization; public weatherization dollars that could be harnessed to create local jobs are underutilized or are going to contractors who don't employ city residents. Meanwhile, the Laborers are organizing a local for residential construction workers to ensure that jobs created in this sector will pay a living wage.

Another program in the works, to be overseen by the Greater Newark Conservancy, will be funded by city dollars for prisoner re-entry programs. Conservancy executive director Robin Dougherty explains that in its first year, the program will give 128 ex-offenders their first jobs after returning to the community, working with the conservancy for roughly eight weeks before being placed in permanent jobs. As workers clean up the city's many trash-strewn lots, they will learn basic landscaping skills, light construction and urban farming. "They're not necessarily all going to get green jobs," Dougherty cautions, but he says the basic skills they learn will help them get jobs in other sectors.

Mayor Booker says that when all sectors—the port, recreation, even policing—are seen from a green perspective, 'it expands our imagination.'

Newark is incubating so many projects—one trains thirty young people to install solar panels and leads to union apprenticeships; another is an internship that trains a class of sixty in green construction—that even the mayor's office can't keep track of them all. But it is unclear how programs reaching dozens of workers can create jobs for the city's 14,000 unemployed. It also remains to be seen whether private sector employers will hire workers trained on these short-term, public sector projects. So far, the city is largely creating demand for green workers by revamping its operations. The public entity with the greatest potential to create green jobs, the port, is controlled by the New York and New Jersey Port Authority, which the New Jersey Environmental Federation says has not been "forward thinking" about greening its operations. ("Right now the port is killing us," Thompson-Gaddy says in frustration.)

Over in Trenton, watching his city's experiments with green jobs, acting director of economic development Jerome Harris says, "I think there's more noise than there is light." Though the city's initiatives include a $46 million carbon abatement project in partnership with the local power utility, he is wary of estimating how many jobs it will create. "People are talking green jobs, but we're not able to effectively project how many and when," he says. "I don't think we know enough about those moving parts yet."

Creating jobs—green or otherwise—in cities like Newark and Trenton is largely a question of resources, says Alan Berube, research director of the Metropolitan Policy Program at the Brookings Institution. Right now, the greatest potential for new resources to devote to such projects lies in the stimulus package being hammered out in Washington. Newark is especially eager to see President Obama follow through on a pledge to create a national program to weatherize a million homes each year.

The Center for American Progress, part of a national partnership led by the Apollo Alliance, which oversaw Newark's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

recent Green Future Summit, estimates that 57,228 jobs can be created in New Jersey by giving the state $3.2 billion of a proposed national Green Economic Recovery program. This would include $1.3 billion in building retrofits.

Even without an infusion of federal dollars, says Thompson-Gaddy, Newark is seeing a "snowball effect where everybody is really engaging in the green economy and creating green jobs." She hopes Newark's pilot programs will soon be training 500 workers each year who will graduate not only into permanent jobs but will become entrepreneurs, starting small businesses installing green technology and distributing the equipment and raw materials these businesses use.

Green construction trainee Perry McKinney is optimistic, too. "I just love to be a part of something positive for me, wherever my God may be taking me," he says.

"It gave me hope." ■

Good Work—If Youth Can Find It

Young activists are pushing for their piece of the new green economy.

by KRISTINA RIZGA

In the fall of 2004, then–college student Julian Mocine-McQueen was outraged that the prosperous city of San Francisco was doing little to prevent or talk about the high rate of homicides among young African-American and Latino men. So he started organizing young people around violence prevention programs through the League of Young Voters, a national voter engagement organization that also supports community organizers working with low-income youth. He had no idea that in a few years he would move from violence prevention to environmental justice. Mocine-McQueen, 28, is now a field organizer with Green For All, a national advocacy organization dedicated to supporting local activists in their efforts to improve their neighborhoods through energy conservation and job-creation initiatives. "Green jobs allowed me to address the root causes of violence—no jobs, no money," he explains.

KAREN CALDICOTT

On February 4 Mocine-McQueen is heading to Good Jobs, Green Jobs—a conference in Washington, DC, where more than 1,000 labor leaders will learn tactics on how to press the government to expand markets for green jobs. He will hold sessions that emphasize building a more inclusive economy—one that creates wealth-building opportunities for historically neglected, low-income communities of color. He is encouraged to see the growing numbers of supportive labor groups across the country who recognize the need to diversify their ranks.

Then, from February 27 to March 2, Mocine-McQueen will attend Power Shift 2009, a gathering of more than 10,000 young environmental activists, also in Washington, put together by the Energy Action Coalition (EAC) in partnership with fifty of its membership organizations, including Green For All. "As future inheritors of this planet, young people get the urgency of this problem," says Jessy Tolkan, EAC's executive director. In 2007 Power Shift—part political rally, part concert, part K Street–style lobbying day—brought more than 6,000 young people to Washington. The event helped firmly plant the concept of green jobs within the organizing landscape of young climate change activists. "That message of green jobs is really sticking with young people, because it is so solutions-oriented," Tolkan explains. A proof of its growing appeal: EAC's e-mail list has grown from 10,000 to 500,000 since 2007.

But the impact of the student green jobs movement should also be measured in the powerful change it has brought to lives and communities. Take Pittsburgh native Chester Thrower III. The first time he heard of "green jobs" was a year ago. He Googled the term and found videos of the idea's fiercest preacher, Green For All founder Van Jones. It wasn't the first time Thrower heard outsiders promising jobs for Pittsburgh's predominantly African-American neighborhoods, where the unemployment rate for males has been among the highest in the nation for decades. But this time it felt different. Jones struck a chord within him. Jones told Thrower that he could be an entrepreneur, that he could run his own business someday.

Thrower was inspired. He could think of only four people who own small businesses in the Manchester neighborhood of Pittsburgh where he grew up. The rest worked primarily in service industries, making minimum wage. His friend Khari Mosley from the League of Young Voters helped him enroll in the Green For All Academy late last year so he could hear Jones speak in person. There, Jones laid out some potential paths for Thrower's dream of becoming his own boss. What really moved Thrower to action was the realization that with this business, he would also have the power to give something back to his neighborhood. He could give unemployed young people on Pittsburgh's street corners good jobs retrofitting old, polluted buildings and installing solar panels. "That enlightened me and got me interested in the solar panels," Thrower recalls. "I figure the sun is always going to be here, and I could learn to harness that somehow."

In February Thrower will be taking a ten-week class on solar panel installation that will cost him only $350, including

Kristina Rizga is the executive editor of WireTap *magazine, project director of Future5000.com and a member of the* Nation *editorial board.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

books—much less than a vocational certificate or college degree. The class will be taught by the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 95 in Pittsburgh. Thrower plans to work with the League of Young Voters to create more classes like these targeted at young people in urban, working-class neighborhoods of Pittsburgh.

Thrower sees green jobs as the best way to stop drug-related violence in Pittsburgh. For more than a year, he worked as a community organizer in Manchester, and almost every young person he approached asked him, "Can you get me a job?" Thrower felt powerless as he watched young people sell drugs to help their parents pay their bills.

Nationally, there are about 1.7 million low-income youths (16 to 24) who were out of school and out of work in 2005, according to a report by the Center for American Progress. Many of them live in areas of concentrated poverty and are often striving for precious few opportunities that the corporate media glorify—rap stars, professional athletes. When Thrower tells young people in Manchester about green jobs, "it goes in one ear and out the other." Despite this, he is confident that once he starts to put solar panels up in his neighborhood, he'll become a tangible new role model young people will want to emulate.

The trouble is: there are no solar installation jobs in Manchester for Thrower right now. That's why he is working with the League of Young Voters to lobby for job-training support and energy efficiency grants from the city, state and federal government that will help create the demand for these newly trained workers. "The time is now," Thrower says, raising his voice. "If low-income people are not aware and are not exposed to these opportunities right now, two, three years later it may be too late. We may get shut out of the process again."

While local leaders like Thrower and Mocine-McQueen work to build awareness about green jobs block by block, and groups like Green For All build alliances between traditional blue-collar workers and lower-income communities of color, EAC adds a powerful punch to this cause from the nation's campuses. The result is the largest and most diverse youth and student movement in the country. Young voters were a key constituency in the election of this country's first African-American president, and thousands of Power Shift 2009 activists will let Congress know that this powerful voting bloc expects not only substantive investments in the transition to a green economy but also explicit provisions for green job growth for unemployed youth.

Youth organizers, who work on the margins of American society to eliminate racism and poverty through issues like prison and public school reforms, haven't had so much reason for hope in a long time. The growing popularity of energy conservation and green jobs among people of all ages and backgrounds, the openness among some moderate Republicans to a green economy as a pathway to more entrepreneurship and innovation, and the urgent need to come up with an economic recovery plan present the potential for a perfect political storm. This unprecedented coalition, standing at a historic crossroads, might just create enough of a critical mass to push through something that finally benefits working-class youth in communities like Manchester. ■

Letters

(continued from page 2)

Jack Spicer, Surprise Visitor

Eugene, Ore.

Long after his death, poet Jack Spicer has popped up unexpectedly—again [Barry Schwabsky, "Between the Dead and the Living," Jan. 5]. Jack was my best friend in Berkeley in the 1940s, but we lost touch. Some years ago, I went on an unplanned first visit to the Yerba Buena museum in San Francisco because the line was too long at another museum. There I saw on a bulletin board a lecture the next day by the authors of books about Jack. I wrote one of them, Kevin Killian (*Poet Be Like God*). Jack had written about me in his notes but called me Bobby, my nickname then. In one note, he referred to a poem on Ezra Pound he had sent me after I mailed him a book of Pound's poems. By figuring out that I was Bobby, Killian was able to unearth the "lost" poem. He then wrote an article about my days with Jack in Berkeley and discovered that I had another piece of "unknown" information: Jack had been an extra in the movie *Wilson*. Digging up the film, Killian was able to find Jack—and freeze-frame his bit; it served as the cover picture on the literary magazine to which he had sent the article, *26 B*. I eagerly await some new surprising visit from Jack.

Barbara Nicholls

Georgia on My Mind

Washington, D.C.

Anatol Lieven's "For a New US Policy Toward Russia" [Jan. 12/19] is alarmingly inaccurate when he states that "US policy has encouraged Georgia to attack Russia." In truth, Georgia has never attacked Russia, and US officials at all levels have repeatedly warned Georgians against armed entanglements with its neighbor, even in the face of provocations. Georgia's disastrous military actions in August were confined to parts of South Ossetia, which is in Georgia proper, not Russia. Lieven is also wrong to speak of "American policy that encourages Russia's neighbors to attack what Russia sees as its vital interest." This is not US policy in the Caucasus, period.

Alex van Oss

Lieven Replies

London

I did not suggest that the United States encouraged Georgia to attack Russia. However, as to an encouragement of Russia's neighbors to attack what Russia sees as its vital security interests in the region, that has long been an obvious feature of US policy. Concerning South Ossetia, since Russian troops were deployed there, any Georgian attack on that region was bound to involve an attack on the Russian military. What the US response would be to such an attack on its troops Alex van Oss must surely know very well.

Anatol Lieven

Obama's Oath on Our Cover

The numerals for the key to the February 2 cover, on page 7, were hard to discern for many of our readers. For a better view, go to thenation.com/doc/20090202/key.

Also in the key, the second "s" in Fred Shuttlesworth's name was missing.

A poster of the cover is in the works.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books & the Arts.

Further Adventures in Editing

by TED SOLOTAROFF

One day I received a call from the reception desk: a woman named Cynthia Ozick wanted to talk about writing for *Commentary*. I knew her name from a few poems I had come across in the literary magazines, and though I had pretty much stopped recruiting, I still liked to think of myself as approachable.

Small, awkward, intense, she arrived with an air of shyness that turned into ardor once she got going, reminding me of certain female graduate students who were like nuns in the library stacks and passionate in the seminars. Volubly thanking me for seeing her, she said that she had just been to *The New York Review of Books*, where they had all but thrown her out. She went on to tell me in her tight, edgy voice, the swarming eyes behind her scholarly spectacles never leaving my face, about a long novel, eight years in the writing, that she had just submitted. She now wanted to try her hand at reviewing. She said that she was a friend of Alfred Chester. Was I his editor?

I was. Alfred was our star literary reviewer—flamboyant, irreverent, unpredictable, even from one paragraph to the next. A flaming queen with a red wig, crystalline prose style and a razor wit, he seemed about 179 degrees across the human spectrum from this literary vestal virgin. But perhaps not. His stare burned with the same intensity.

We talked about a piece I had written about the life struggle and mind-shrinking indoctrination process of a married graduate student, which she said had confirmed the rightness of her decision to leave graduate school after receiving her master's degree. Her thesis, too, had been on Henry James. The more we talked, the more I sensed that Cynthia fell squarely into the category that Midge Decter referred to as "lit'ry ladies"—intensely fancy female academic writers.

A new John Cheever novel, *The Wapshot Scandal*, had recently come out. I chose it because the social dimension of Cheever's fiction was so front-and-center that Cynthia would be less likely to go astray into narrative gesture and symbolic form. I told her to think of our audience as a bright lawyer in Minneapolis who is broadly literate rather than narrowly literary. What followed from that was not to get involved in the "internal" mechanism of the novel but rather to use it to comment on the character of Cheever's fiction. Or again, she might think of putting the novel into an interesting context: the ethos of the *New Yorker* fiction writer, say, or WASP hegemony under duress, or the role of male fantasy in his work. Something like that.

In due course Cynthia's review arrived, and after a few sentences I knew we were in trouble.

> What is the difference between a minor and a major writer? Certainly it is not subject matter: *The Wapshot Scandal* and *Anna Karenina* are both about adultery. Nor is it a question of control—John Cheever has an aerialist's sly command over just how taut the line of a sentence should be, and just how much power must be applied or withheld in the risk of ascent.

All of which culminated in the point that minor writers "do not believe in what they are showing us. Major writers believe. Minor writers record not societies, or even allegories of societies, but vapid dreams and pageants of desire."

The rest of the review was harder to follow. Flashes of perception kept turning obscure—sometimes in the same sentence. "St. Botolphs is not really what we are meant to take it for, a dying New England village redolent of its sailing-glory days—it too is a fabrication, a sort of Norman Rockwell cover done in the manner of Braque."

In a long explanatory cover letter, Cynthia at one point characterized the novel in a quick, deft way that provided more of a sense of the texture of *The Wapshot Scandal* than her entire review. I returned it with a letter pointing this out, questioning her criteria for major and minor writers. (Was

ISAAC SOLOTAROFF

Ted Solotaroff, early 1960s

credence really what separated Faulkner from Eudora Welty, Dreiser from Sherwood Anderson?) I observed that she was "trying to say too much that was complex and too little that was clear and descriptive and

---

Ted Solotaroff (1928–2008) was an editor at Commentary *and* Book Week, *the founding editor of* New American Review *and a senior editor at Harper & Row. He was a contributing editor of* The Nation *and the author of two memoirs,* Truth Comes in Blows *and* First Loves.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

oriented to the common reader who may not have read much of Cheever." I said that if she could stand to revise the review developing the précis in her letter in much the same straightforward prose, I'd be glad to consider it.

A few days later I received a four-page, single-spaced letter that began with Cynthia noting her gratitude to me, her towering esteem for *Commentary* and its writer-editors, and then a long defense of her review as being written precisely to the framework I had given her, and ended by asking me to reread the review "in the light of the responses I have given your points." This was a first. I was struck by her audacity, touched by her passion for the magazine and pissed off by her effrontery. I thought she needed a cold shoulder to lean on and wrote accordingly:

> Dear Miss Ozick:
>
> I'm puzzled by your letter. I don't quite understand why you have such admiration for the character of *Commentary* as a "serious" literary journal and why you are also so intransigent in the face of the editorial principles, tactics, queries, etc. that in large part determine this character. You also express a keen desire to write for the magazine but do not wish to make the choices that writing for it require: i.e. choosing to be less fancy, allusive, oblique, assuming, in a word less "literary." If you don't wish to make this choice, why then don't make it, but then you're deluding yourself if you think you really want to write for *Commentary*.

I ended by leaving the door open to discuss this impasse further if she wished.

Soon she walked back in, we thrashed out again the parameters of an acceptable *Commentary* review, and she went forth to try her hand at one, which we then worked on together. The new version began:

> In one of John Cheever's Shady Hill stories a man comes home to his suburb after a plane trip. The plane has crashed in a field, but everyone has awesomely survived. The man enters his house in a sublime mood.… He has the sense that he is a secret angel, but everything is just the same as always, and no one wants to notice.

After deftly summarizing a more surreal version of a similar experience in *The Wapshot Scandal*, Cynthia observed:

> Most of John Cheever's people, even the wicked ones, are wistful secret angels—like seraphim they have their errands and burdens, only nobody notices. That nobody ever notices is the real scandal of *The Wapshot Scandal*. It is, also, in a way, Cheever's own scandal as a writer.

Shades of Alfred Chester! The review moved briskly along on the rails of this direct, trenchant line of inquiry, the "scandal" being Cheever's inattentiveness to the society he purports to describe, whether St. Botolphs or the noncommunity surrounding a missile site, the good or evil of contemporary America: "Cheever can look at nothing in society without drawing a halo around it with his golden crayon; he transmutes his America into an enormous, generalized St. Botolphs—and then, playing satirist, scolds the residue that…resists wholesale Botolphsizing."

I, of course, was delighted by the transformation of the review. Cynthia, as it turned out, wasn't. Many years later, after she had become a famous fiction writer and essayist, she told me that she had hated every minute we worked on the review together. Moreover, she had sent the original version to *The Antioch Review*, which not only published it but later included it in the fiftieth-anniversary issue. I doubt, though, that had I known of that outcome it would have given me much pause or resolved my ambivalence. There was still too much ego gain for me in being the hotshot *Commentary* editor-writer who had prodded her effectively.

The first year I worked at *Commentary*, my relationship with Norman was positive, if not friendly. He took me to various meetings and events; invited me and my wife to the dinner parties that usually included one or more of The Elders; and even took us to Hannah Arendt's New Year's Eve party, an invitation he coveted as much as the narrator does his invitation to the grand soiree of the Duc and Duchesse de Guermantes in *Remembrance of Things Past*. We also did several radio talks about the magazine on WBAI, the radical FM station, which made me feel like I was his second in command.

Still, I was never comfortable with Norman. From our first meeting, when he had been at his most ingratiating, which wasn't much, I sensed that part of my identity at *Commentary* seemed to be that of the house *epikoros* (a Jewish ignoramus), one of the new breed of suburban Jews who didn't know a blintz from a midrash. When Norman, an up-from-the-ghetto urban Jew, used a Yiddish expression, he'd sometimes glance in my direction to see if I got it.

But the differences went beyond that to temperament: his was aggressive and ambitious; mine was circumspect and diffident. He did much of his socializing with other highflying players in the status league—Mailer, Jason Epstein, Jack Thompson. To their dinners at The Palm restaurant I was never invited. I didn't feel left out of this circle, since I didn't have the freedom or money or interest to carouse with them. As it was turning out, other than the magazine and the New York intellectual scene, Norman and I didn't have much to talk about. He had next to no interest in me personally and seemed to regard his main role in the relationship as that of setting me straight or giving me the lowdown, which in time made me a bit standoffish, being able to take only so much of his categorical and reductive thinking. Everyone, seemingly everything, significant was shunted into a slot in his mind: Roger Straus was *the* publisher; Steven Marcus was *the* young academic; Willie Morris was *the* Southerner; Isaac Rosenfeld was *the luftmensch*. Moreover, Norman moved at a different pace, propelled by his ambition. I remember going with him to a big reception at the Israeli Embassy. When we arrived, I went to the coat check to stow my briefcase. After a minute or so, when I entered, Norman was already at the far end of the long, crowded room, having glided through the throng like Gale Sayers, and was shaking hands and talking animatedly to a man who turned out to be Shimon Peres.

Things were quite different with his wife, Midge. She had been very welcoming and helpful from the start, when she baby-sat Paul and Ivan while my wife and I were apartment-hunting. A curious relationship then developed between us. With Norman and their crowd she was a tough, knowing, wisecracking master of New York intellectual repartee, a Jewish Mary McCarthy who liked to fall into a side-of-the-mouth delivery. With me, she came on very differently—quiet, gentle, a woman of feeling. Alone, she was one of the easiest people to talk with I've known; like a good dancer she followed effortlessly, often letting me lead, our minds in sync. We talked about writers and writing without the gossipy knowingness such discussions took on—"You know what's really behind Saul's new book, don't you," or "the real reason Irving has taken a job at Stanford." We also talked a lot about the Midwest, where Midge had been raised and I had been educated, and about raising kids in the city. Midge had girls and I had two boys, so

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NATION IS TOO BIG FOR THE PAPER IT'S PRINTED ON

Did you know your subscription to *The Nation* gives you free admission to the larger world of TheNation.com?

Go to thenation.com/access, enter your subscription account number (it's on your address label) and create a user name. Once is enough: you're aboard for the life of your subscription.

You'll get immediate unlimited access to our archive, which dates back 144 years, and to web-only features, blogs and analyses of breaking news that won't fit within the pages of the magazine. You can make use of any and all of these services:

TAKE ACTION Legislative updates and alerts, help in e-mailing your Congressperson. Get involved!

VIDEO NATION YouTube for progressives: Video interviews, rants, messages from *Nation* writers and editors.

STUDENT NATION News and resources for student activists, details on *Nation* college tours and writing contests.

WEB LETTERS Reader letters published in real time, from real people, including (if you like) you.

SLIDE SHOW Pictures tell the story, plus links to related *Nation* articles.

AROUND THE NATION A progressive calendar of political, social and cultural events in every community.

TEACHING GUIDE *The Nation* Classroom offers reading, research and writing assignments for college and high school.

NATION POLLS Who's the worst president ever? *The Nation* answers questions Gallup may not ask.

MOBILE Read *The Nation* on your smart phone.

NATION ARCHIVE Searchable exact page images from over 6,000 weekly issues; dates back to July 1865.

TheNation.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

there were those differences, too, to talk about. Though Midge was a dark, vibrant woman, our relationship wasn't ever flirty, and so I was completely taken aback when one evening, as a group of us were drinking cocktails, Ruthie, their 5-year-old, climbed into my lap and said, "Why don't you stay here all the time and be our Daddy?"

american review 16
the magazine of new writing
edited by theodore solotaroff
an nfra perkins's first dream by harold brodkey
ralph ellison's "cadillac flambe" from
his long-awaited new novel
the new pastoral beat of allen ginsberg
john hawkes's "the universal fears" and much more
PRIVATE COLLECTION

The February 1973 issue of *American Review*

I have no idea what was said in the tight moment that ensued. Maybe nothing. But it made me wary with Midge, not to say Norman. About the only overt outcome, if it was that, came one day soon after when Norman and I found ourselves at the water cooler. He said, "You think you're pretty bohemian, but you're not. You believe in being faithful, and bohemians don't."

I had long since stopped thinking of myself as bohemian, and though the issue of fidelity was beginning to come up in the course of therapy, both my wife's and mine, it was hardly something I wanted to talk about with him. So I said, "It's pretty hard to be a bohemian in Riverdale. I have enough trouble being Jewish on my block."

"No, you'd be just the same if you were living in the Village. You're essentially square."

That was about it. Whatever his subtext was, he wasn't getting all that much out of his freedom, which, from what I saw and heard, pretty much came down to his getting drunk at parties. He was drinking and smoking heavily, had a painful ailment and sometimes couldn't drag himself to the office. He was also going through a prolonged writing block, while I was writing fairly regularly for *Commentary* and also had branched out to *The New Republic* and *Book Week* (then the literary supplement of the *Herald Tribune*). I don't think he was annoyed by my modest literary success but rather because I wasn't devoting myself heart and soul to the magazine.

I'd been reading Daniel Fuchs's *Homage to Blenholt*, one of the trilogy of novels that made Fuchs, along with Henry Roth, one of the earlier Jewish-American novelists still to be reckoned with. He had long since drifted out to Hollywood and had hardly been heard from since, other than as the screenwriter of *Panic in the Streets*. But in his preface to the new edition of the trilogy [reprinted by Basic Books in 1961], he wrote, "The popular notions about the movies aren't true" and went on to point out how the problems of the screenwriter are often the same as those of imaginative writers everywhere. I sent him a letter saying that I had a hunch that he had much more to say about writing for film and the culture of Hollywood, and how much we would welcome such a piece. One morning, two months later, I found a letter from him sitting on top of a pile of incoming mail:

> Dear Mr. Solotaroff:
>
> Thank you for your kind letter and compliments. Yes, your hunch was right, I would like very much to tell about the problems and values I've encountered, writing for the movies all these years. I'm so slow in replying to you because I thought it would be a pleasant gesture—in return for your warm letter—to send you the completed essay. But it's taken me longer than I thought it would....

When I turned the page there was another lying beneath it, then another. Virtually the whole stack of mail proved to be the essay as a letter to me. And it was a honey, both an up-close and introspective account of his experience working with major producers, directors and writers in Hollywood (one of the latter likely being William Faulkner), culminating in two of the epic battles he had witnessed between virtuoso talent and no less egomaniacal producers. There was also an unforgettable vignette depicting the loneliness of a formerly world-famous actress and sex symbol who had called Fuchs's home late one night looking for the previous owners, then continued to call at that time, as though making the same mistake, but so as to continue conversing with his wife. (She turned out to be Rita Hayworth.)

Written with ardor and insight, traversing the Hollywood process from script to production to pre-release screening, the memoir overturned most of the canards about Hollywood moviemaking. Its pitch of passion reached perhaps its highest note in writing about the film Fuchs most wanted to write, one he was challenged by a studio executive to write on speculation:

> I sometimes think a successful motion picture story is so complex and impossibly constituted that you don't really write them—that they already exist and that you *find* them, that they're either there, somewhere, or else you're doomed. This was one of those stories, touched with grace and blessed. It went kindly. It became vigorous and spunky with life. I found, and firmly, the dramatic incubus, that enveloping cloud of anxiety against which a man moment by moment pits himself and which thereby gives a story its never-ceasing, insidious thrust. I found the theatrical image of my hero, the humor—that dancing bundle of slants, deceits, stratagems by which a man conceals his despair and which gives him an instantaneous hold on the attention of the audience. Best of all, what delighted me, was a lyricism—I caught, and was able to show, those innermost dreams and raptures the steady dissolution of which infuses a man's despair with meaning and a piercing, significant emotion.

Everyone was thrilled by the piece. There was virtually nothing to do but run it. Norman said, "Of course, you need to get a new lede."

"Pity. I kind of like it this way," I said in a mostly kidding voice.

It turned out that Fuchs did too. When I suggested we begin with the fifth sentence, "I've always been impressed by the sure, brimming conviction of people who attack Hollywood," he replied, "I'm sorry you object to the Dear Mr. Solotaroff. That of course is the way the piece began and it seems very right to me. It gives the article a clear, sensible reason for having been written. I would hate to lose this support."

I showed the letter to Norman, who was,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as I expected, adamant. I said, Rather than buck Fuchs, when we're all so pleased otherwise, why don't we compromise and start the piece "Dear Editors"? He reluctantly agreed, and I wrote back to Fuchs suggesting the compromise and figured that was that. But when he sent back the galleys, it turned out it wasn't:

> Would you bear with me if I nag away some more on the dear Mr. Solotaroff and the original lines? The present opening paragraph isn't, alas, very good. It should be fat and it isn't. It doesn't ring true. The reader has a way of knowing. It's part of the shy, cockeyed charm of the piece, let's say, that a man with the wonderful name of Solotaroff wrote to me and that I answered him and that this was how the piece came to be done.

I took the letter to Norman. "Why not humor him," I said. "Besides, it would give our format a touch of variety." He handed the letter back to me, shook his head at the folly of some people and went back to what he was doing.

I didn't care that much about being named, but there was still the matter of Fuchs's reiterated request and how to let him down without antagonizing him. Also I was irked by being rudely dismissed by Norman. "Why don't you tell him then?" I said. "Coming from me he'll be offended, since I've already turned his lede down once. Coming from you he'll be less offended, and I'd like to keep him writing for the magazine."

"So he'll be offended," Norman said, going on with his work, ending the discussion.

The climax of the second act of our relationship came in early 1963. Norman had commissioned a piece by James Baldwin on the Black Muslim movement and had done a good deal of hand-holding in the prolonged course of Baldwin's writing it. By the time Baldwin finally finished the piece, it had grown into the book-length journey through the shadowland of black militancy that would be published as "The Fire Next Time." When Norman inquired about it, Baldwin told him that it had turned out to be too long for *Commentary* and that it had been sent to *The New Yorker*. Already in a fury, Norman then found out that *The New Yorker* had accepted and scheduled it. A ton of fat went into the fire.

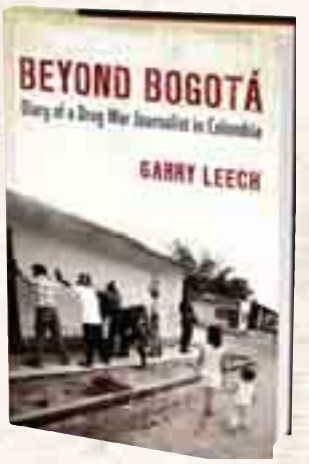
This, in turn, further energized Norman's rage by activating his memories of growing up in Brownsville, Brooklyn, where the Jewish kids were oppressed and the black kids were their oppressors. One night, Baldwin showed up and Norman let him have it. Baldwin said he should write the tirade he was hearing, in effect providing reparation by giving Norman an idea for a powerful piece of his own. Indeed, Norman was so turned on by the idea and its boldness that he was able to blast through his writer's block to produce his famous essay "My Negro Problem—And Ours." I think he was also emboldened by the opportunity to announce a truth, like the one about success, that none in his liberal cohort dared to admit and that would put him right back at the center of attention.

Normally, a piece by a member of the staff circulated in manuscript like any other and benefited from our comments. But Norman's came around already in type, not even galleys but page proofs, all set to lead off the next issue. It was the first time he had openly pulled rank, and it stung. All the more so when he wound up his self-exposé of the fear- and hate-twisted feelings of whites—liberals no less than reactionaries—toward blacks by making a large and, to me, very dubious point that the stigma of color and the hope of ending it as a poison on both sides of the racial barrier would not come in time, by way of the liberal panacea of integration, to spare us Baldwin's "fire":

> I share this hope, but I cannot see how it will ever be realized unless color does *in fact* disappear: and that means not integration, it means assimilation, it means—let the brutal word come out—miscegenation. The Black Muslims, like their racist counterparts in the white world, accuse the "so-called Negro leaders" of secretly pursuing miscegenation as a goal. The racists are wrong, but I wish they were right, for I believe that the wholesale merging of the two races is the most desirable alternative for everyone concerned.

Up to that point, "My Negro Problem—And Ours" had been a nakedly candid account of how Norman's boyhood experiences in Brownsville had left a residue of fear, hatred and envy of blacks in his psyche, which gave the lie to liberal racial pieties. But for him to then try to trump integration with miscegenation was very troubling: first, because of the heroic civil rights movement in the South that daily was gaining wider and deeper Northern support through its nonviolent strategy and practice; and second, because he was doing so in a banner piece for the "new *Commen-*

"[A] REMARKABLE SAGA."
—NOAM CHOMSKY



BEYOND BOGOTÁ
DIARY OF A DRUG WAR JOURNALIST IN COLOMBIA
GARRY LEECH

"*Beyond Bogotá* is critical to understanding the so-called 'War on Drugs' waged by the U.S. government in Colombia. . . . If you want the truth about the reality on the ground there, read this book."
—DAHR JAMAIL, author of *Beyond the Green Zone: Dispatches from an Unembedded Journalist in Occupied Iraq*

"Garry Leech belongs in the company of a handful of war correspondents—Patrick Cockburn, Robert Fisk, Christian Parenti—who have been risking life and limb to bring to light the catastrophic human and environmental consequences of U.S. foreign policy."
—FORREST HYLTON, author of *Evil Hour in Colombia*

"A gripping and inspired book . . . Leech has created an essential volume for anyone who wants to understand Colombia's conflict, or indeed the U.S. role in Latin America."
—ADAM ISACSON, Director of Programs, Center for International Policy (Washington, D.C.)

BEACON
www.beacon.org
www.beaconbroadside.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tary," which was trying to chart a course for pressing political and social reform. I thought it through and decided that I couldn't feel right working there if I didn't let him know what I thought. So I walked down to his office and we had it out. As clearly as I can remember, the discussion went along these lines:

"I guess since you sent this around in pages, it's set in stone."

"What do you want to say about it?"

"I think it's courageous, strong and valuable up to the end. But I think the conclusion you come to about the solution being miscegenation is untimely, to say the least, and all wet if the deep-down feelings are what you say they are. I think it will do you and the magazine a lot of harm, and I think you should reconsider it."

By then he had turned to ice. "Is that all?" he said.

"No, it isn't. There are my own reasons. We're trying to keep the image and values of a more humane America alive and working, and about the only concrete political action toward that end is the civil rights movement. What you're saying in effect to those black ministers and students who are risking their lives is to stop trying to integrate, stop trying to claim their constitutional rights and liberties, and find some white chick or guy and have babies. That's how it's going to be read."

He said coldly, "I'm not proposing miscegenation as a solution but as the best outcome, given the refusal of whites, particularly liberals, to own up to their real feelings about Negroes." Then he said, his voice clenched with anger, "I don't ever want to hear you tell me again what's good or bad for *Commentary*. Ever!"

I could sense we were now on the fast track to an explosion that would end with my leaving the magazine—which I wasn't prepared to do. "Well, thanks for hearing me out," I said, and then got up and left.

There was some hue and cry about the miscegenation issue, but it was mostly swallowed up by the applause the piece received. Norman was back at his favorite place, and I was moved toward the periphery at *Commentary*.

The author I most enjoyed working with during this second act was Alfred Chester. Except for our both being Jewish and literary, we couldn't have been less alike. I, the burdened husband and then single parent with a strong streak of idealism; Alfred, the bohemian queen who confessed in his review of *Naked Lunch*:

> I am a ne'er-do-well, I suppose, a cynic, an immoralist, and therefore very contemporary. In a pinch, I would give up everything, because I value nothing, except my skin.... It feels so good, especially in the sun or in the woods or in the sea or against another. Philosophy, politics, furniture, books, paintings, human relationships, the whole of Western civilization—none of it feels so good, none of it is me.

Alfred had grown up as the youngest child in an Orthodox Jewish family in Brooklyn and was marked by a treatment for a childhood illness that left him not only bald for life but also without eyebrows, eyelashes and body hair. With his scruffy, outlandish orange-red wig, which sat uneasily on his head, he looked bizarre. Without it, his narrow blue eyes, usually glinting with irony, his chubby cheeks and his sexy pout of a mouth came more sharply into view and made him look like a Jewish Pan.

He had recently returned from a decade in Paris and had entered the New York literary scene with a big splash—an archly provocative put-down in *Partisan Review* of *Tropic of Cancer* ("Even *Romeo and Juliet* is more stimulating"). Norman had asked him to review John Updike's collection *Pigeon Feathers and Other Stories*, and this piece, too, was startling and even more transgressive. After granting Updike's skill with syntax and details, which created a polished surface with the illusion of depth, he declared:

> Updike shows us nothing to which we can refer his scrubbed and hygienic characters—not to any real emotions, not to any idea of destiny, not to God, torment, laughter, nature, eternity, anything large: anything large, that is, except the word-rate of the world's most generous literary oasis, the *New Yorker*. Let us sit down for a moment at this expensive watering place of Updike's art where, with weary avaricious sighs, so many other writers have at last disburdened themselves of their talents.

This last jab from a writer whose sale of a story to *The New Yorker* had enabled him to clamber out of poverty in Paris and return to New York. Norman had turned him over to me, and late one afternoon soon after the Updike review appeared, so did he, having come to ask for an advance on his next piece for us. He wasn't wearing his wig that day, and I was conscious of a certain nimble boyishness coexisting with his bald, dissolute face: Huck Finn meets the Baron de Charlus. When I asked him where he wanted to go for a drink, he said, "Oh, any Irish gin mill will do. Nothing Upper East Side." Then he said, "How do you like my outfit?"

He was wearing a ragged French sailor blouse, soiled white duck pants and sandals. "I'd say you look like a French Quarter cafe writer down on his luck."

"Perfect," he said. "I didn't know you, so I decided to dress down. The impoverished look. Is Norman going to give me the advance?"

"Sure," I said. "You're a catch."

"That's the nicest thing anyone has said to me for at least a week." Then he said, "Don't worry. I can tell you're straight as a string." And giving me the eye, he said, "But if you ever decide to broaden your experience, there are a few things I'd like to show you."

Basking a bit in his flirtatiousness, I lost my uneasiness about his rapier wit, and we hit it off from the start. We got to talking about writers we liked, mine outnumbering his about ten to one.

At one point he asked me about Lawrence Durrell. I said I'd tried to read *The Alexandria Quartet*. "It's just so decadent," I said.

At which his face lit up. "But of course," he said. The only current American writer he seemed to have much use for was Norman Mailer. He said that Mailer had the vision, intelligence and guts to say something new and to create what was most needed in America, a political hero. "I wish he'd cut out the God and Devil stuff. It's so boring and makes him silly. Also I wish he'd stop running to be Norman Mailer."

The last point seemed to me particularly fresh and astute, more in the spirit of the swashbuckling literary swordsman I'd been reading than the amiable one I was drinking with. "But don't most really outspoken writers want to be in the public eye?" I asked. "Aren't you running to be Alfred Chester?" In a heartbeat, he dropped his congeniality and looked threatened. "No," he said. "There are too many of them."

"Too many what?"

"Too many me's." He slowly regained his poise. "When I write fiction, I know who I am. When I write about other writers, I'm just a situational blob, depending on who I'm putting down." It was a strange remark, since he seemed so much himself, so self-possessed, but it would soon become a prophetic one. Over the next hour, I learned that he'd been in Paris for most of the '50s, that he'd written pornography for Maurice Girodias's Traveller's Companion Series as well as a novel about a handsome young corpse, *Jamie Is My Heart's Desire*, that had been published in France and England and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had garnered high praise from V.S. Pritchett. "He said I was fearless and very talented. Not bad. V.S. Pritchett doesn't throw himself away," Alfred explained with his crafty leer.

"I agree with him. You not only take the hide off Updike, you even take a direct poke at *The New Yorker* when you're broke and could use that 'expensive watering place.'"

"Oh, they'll never again publish anything that I can bear to write anyway. I've got a whole drawer full of 'don'ts' from Shawn."

Over the next two years, we published pieces by Alfred on Nabokov, Burroughs, Albee, Salinger and Genet. It was Alfred's dead-eye but personable prose that made me realize that literary criticism didn't have to be solemn to be serious, that it could take the form of individual free play rather than the heavy team spirit I was writing, the team of the New York Elders. Alfred was the Frank O'Hara of criticism, ballsy and shrewd and just this side of smartass; and like O'Hara's insouciant insights, his could be startling.

Take his piece on Burroughs. Commonly regarded as the ghoulish laureate of heroin, he seemed no more than literary sport until Chester came along, took a good look and exclaimed:

> Whether or not Burroughs wrote his book in a narcotic trance, his debt to *Alice in Wonderland* is enormous, and to have got himself thus indebted is so right and so brilliant that it makes me wish I liked *Naked Lunch* better than I do. In attempting to write a novel that will pull the washplug out of the universe, that will wither with scorn and smear with muck all the works of man and God, what could be more superb or to the point than to take as one's method the method used in the most loved story of the English language?

He then goes on to quote a passage on the Mugwumps; their addicted victims, the Reptiles; and the Dream Police that clinches the connection—though, as he says, only very rarely does Burroughs "approach the precision, wit, and truth of Carroll," and mostly is so compulsively violent, scabrous and repetitious that his source becomes incidental.

Instead of the Paris that the *Paris Review* circle, Susan Sontag and other New York literary types had all visited, I had Alfred. He seemed to exude its lauded atmosphere of the cerebral and the dissolute, inviting cafes and seedy hotel rooms, hard times and easy sex. He was brimming with stories about Princess Caetani, whose *Botteghe Oscure* was the high road of literary endeavor, and Mau-

ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY

Ph.D. in Leadership & Change

email
admission@phd.antioch.edu

toll-free
877-800-9466

website
www.phd.antioch.edu

"Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity."
Horace Mann,
Antioch's First President

A low-residency program that combines faculty-mentored, individualized learning with a challenging interdisciplinary core curriculum.

This distinctive program is for professionals seeking a degree that offers:

- Quarterly residencies
- Academic mentoring
- Learner-centered focus
- Integration of theory and practice
- Distinguished faculty
- Flexibility of pace to completion

PROGRESSIVE ECONOMIC PRINCIPLES

INSIGHT IN A 20 MINUTE READ WITH THE SOLUTION TO OUR FINANCIAL CRISIS

WWW.ECONOMICSFORDEMOCRATS.COM

Middlebury

The Middlebury Fellowships in Environmental Journalism

Bill McKibben, *Director*

The Middlebury Fellowships in Environmental Journalism each year takes 10 journalists near the start of their careers and helps them work through an ambitious reporting project in print, Web-based, or radio journalism. Fellows meet together twice during the year, once in the fall at the Bread Loaf campus of Middlebury College, in Vermont, and once in the spring at the Monterey Institute for International Studies, in California. At these meetings professional journalists help participants plan their reporting and shape their stories. Each fellow receives $10,000 to help with reporting and living expenses during the fellowship year.

We interpret the environment broadly. Reporting projects dealing with economics, culture, global issues, and the like are fine, as long as they center in some way on the human relationship with the physical world. Deadlines for applications will be May 15, 2009. Interested applicants should visit www.middlebury.edu\administration\enviro\fellowship, or write:

Christopher Shaw, *Associate Director*
Middlebury Fellowships in Environmental Journalism
Middlebury College, Middlebury, VT 05753
cshaw@middlebury.edu

Cat Lovers Against the Bomb

2009 Wall Calendar

$8.95 US/Canada
+ $1.75 postage

Published by Nebraskans for Peace

Order from: CLAB NATION
P.O. Box 83466, Lincoln, NE 68501
Toll free: (877) 778-3434 • fax: (402) 483-4108
e-mail: catcal@aol.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rice Girodias, whose Traveller's Companion Library was the low one. His perspective was fresh from the Left Bank and he swam easily, almost naturally, in its currents of theory and practice—the *nouvelle vague* novelists as well as more formidable ones like Céline, Camus and Genet. They were all writing different varieties of the anti-novel, and so was he (its working title was "I, Etc."), in order to reinvigorate the form, or at least enable it to breathe fresh air. He also talked a lot about the regnant idea in Paris that alienation and absurdity were not just sociological conditions, as Americans like Paul Goodman treated them, but metaphysical ones, comprising the modern part of human nature now that God was dead or had absconded, leaving behind the exposed, sinful corpse of Christianity and its emptied traditions. He said there were two main schools of the absurd in France—the huffing-and-puffing one of Sartre and the comic, playful one of Ionesco. The latter was known as camp. "Have you seen any of the movies of Godard? Pure camp." He proceeded to give me a lecture on camp, which anticipated much of what his friend Susan Sontag was to say in her famous essay in *PR* the following year. Alfred and Sontag were close, but he clearly regarded himself as the mentor and Sontag as the pupil. He called her "Our Gal Sunday," after the radio soap opera heroine of our childhood. As both my writer and my friend he helped me to loosen up and to take a broader view of serious writing.

Alfred may have come on as an immoralist, but his rebellion against his family and his heritage, drummed into him by Jewish day school, had left him a kind of cynic *manqué*, subject to outbursts of moral passion. His review of *Pale Fire* gave it high marks for its being "marvelously disrespectful" of the conventions of the novel; for its masterful construction; for its trafficking in the unconscious, which creates a phenomenology that is both absurd and filled with "inaccessible, unrecognizable, but very potent horror"—reality as filtered through the mind of the indefatigable and mad narrator, the mythomaniac émigré Charles Kinbote. But he then comes down on its author like a gay Jeremiah:

> If you find as he does and I don't, that it is a scream to write a literary commentary, to be an academician, to be a homosexual, to be insane…then you will roar the sickly laughter of Nabokov. It takes a lot more to make me laugh; it takes the revelation of some truth to make me laugh.… Nabokov hates like Swift, but unlike Swift he is without innocence. His comedy is a lie. It is dead. It is evil, like racial prejudice.

Chester was a cynic *manqué*, a gay Jeremiah, often subject to outbursts of moral passion.

I wasn't to see Alfred again after he left New York in 1963. He lived happily, some of the time, for two years in Tangier and its environs, which provided a milieu as bizarre, magical, druggy, exotic and erotic as himself. It is also where he found the love of his life, a young local fisherman. But he was eventually expelled from Morocco at the instigation of his landlord and in a state of paranoia characterized by reckless driving, destructive tantrums and accusations that Paul Bowles was trying to have him killed.

Returning to New York, he holed up with his despair at being cast out of the one place in the world where he felt at home and wrote a long, naked, heartbroken, at times crazed, at others luminous, reverie in the form of a journal that looked back at himself and what he had lost in Tangier and Elkbir, the village where he had lived with his handsome lover, Larbi, "the Arab." The text became more and more diffuse as it went along; at best, it was a fascinating kaleidoscope of a distraught mind at bay: longing or ironic, matter-of-fact or surreal, enraptured or toxic—depending on what was shaking his mind at the moment. Titled "The Foot," the 200 or more pages of manuscript landed on my desk in early 1969 when I was editing *New American Review*.

"My hell, perhaps, is to go on believing I am still alive." Reading that sentence early in the manuscript hooked me. So, in time, did Alfred's spare evocations—sometimes beautiful, sometimes dire, sometimes both—of his meager present situation in New York and his ravished (in both senses) experiences in Morocco. There were also occasional riffs that revealed the widening split in his mind, his persecution by his inner voices. "I was fourteen when I put on my first wig," began one passage. "It was like having an ax driven straight down the middle of my body. Beginning at the head. Whack! Hacked in two with one blow like a dry little tree. Like a sad little New York tree."

By the time my work was finished, I had a manuscript of 25,000 words. It was still almost three times the length of any I had published in *New American Review*, and one that would probably only sustain the interest of Alfred Chester fans or readers who could endure being cooped up inside a powerful, often exquisite imagination going to pieces. To cope that intensely and intensively with a problematic manuscript, you grow to love it or hate it. Because I loved it, I published it.

Around this time, Alfred was given a good deal of quit money by his family, which sent him and his two Algerian mastiffs—one as fierce, the other as messy as himself—wandering around three continents. He turned up in London at the office of his editor, Diana Athill, asking her to contact the prime minister to stop the voices that were persecuting him. She managed to have him treated and looked after in the therapeutic community that R.D. Laing had organized in the East End, but Alfred soon bolted. He returned to Tangier to live for another year in his newly opulent way, but his aggressive paranoia toward Bowles and others produced the same outcome as before. He tried Greece and New York again and even purchased a shack on a small island on the Marne, which he began to renovate and supply by rowboat.

This misadventure soon ended. Back in Paris, now a basket case from dependence on drugs and vodka, Alfred managed to make his way to Israel. He drifted between hotels and sublets in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, sustained by his heavy consumption of powerful tranquilizers and vodka and the friendship of Robert Friend—a man of exceptional kindness and forbearance. He wrote a long account of these final three years, "Letter From the Wandering Jew," which his agent sent to me after his death, probably by suicide, in 1971. After many pages of complaint and despair, mostly bereft of virtuosity, it ends with these words:

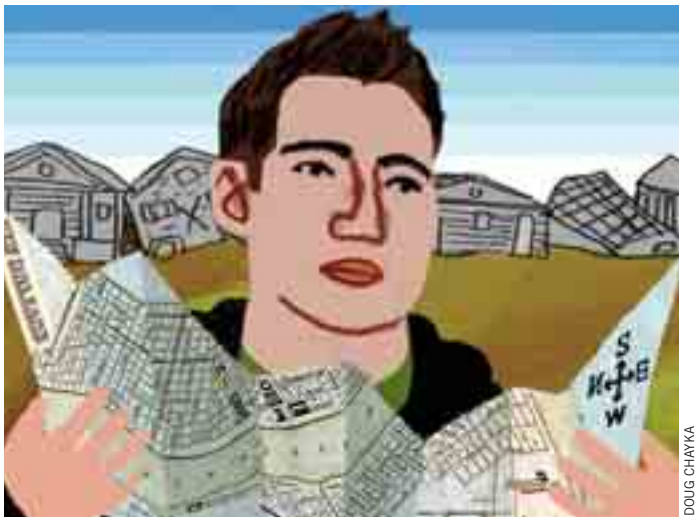
> A few wild poppies are blooming in my littered weedy garden. When I walk out with the dogs I see the poppies opening here and there among the weeds, and here and there a few sickly wilting narcissi. Surely death is no dream, or hopefully not, and that being the case, there is then in truth a homeland, a nowhere, a notime, noiseless and peaceful, the ultimate utopia, the eternal freedom, the end to all hunting for goodness and home.

The long letter was written in a series of cheap Israeli notebooks. On the cover of each was a boy in a paper hat. ■

This is the second part of a two-part article. Part one appeared in last week's issue.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BACK TALK



DOUG CHAYKA

Nato Thompson

Nato Thompson is a curator and producer at Creative Time, a New York City–based arts organization that promotes experimental and site-specific public art. He is also the curator of "Experimental Geography," a traveling exhibition sponsored by Independent Curators International, which features an examination of the history of the Hudson River, a mobile parking booth and alternative maps, among other things. (A catalog of the show is available from Melville House; $29.95.) From February 7 to April 18, "Experimental Geography" will be at the Rochester Art Center in Minnesota.

—Christine Smallwood

What is experimental geography?

Well, I stole the term from a close friend, an artist named Trevor Paglen. He has a PhD in geography from Berkeley, but he comes from an experimental art background. In general, the term "experimental geography" is a catchphrase for an emerging genre, where academic influences blend with an acute sensibility for contemporary art skill sets: visual, spatial. But at the same time, there's rigor. Academic rigor. A real desire to know. There's also a performance element that's influenced by the Situationists, a kind of walking tour. Then there's the more academic approach—people who are in fact architects.

Would you consider the project you worked on with Paul Chan in New Orleans last year—the outdoor production of *Waiting for Godot*—a kind of experimental geography?

Sure, absolutely. *Godot* happened in the Lower Ninth Ward, a very famous site, and also in a not-so-famous neighborhood called Gentilly, but both sites are laden with historical machinations, from the ecological to the racial to the urban. Those politics are right under the feet of people, producing an extraordinarily tragic and somewhat absurd play by Samuel Beckett. There's a phrase that's often used—"Knowledge is a performance." That is to say, you must, to some degree, seduce the reader. You bring knowledge slowly into light. What artists have always known is that ambiguity is a space of thinking. That's what I think Beckett understood in *Godot*. You can't tell anyone anything down in New Orleans. The reality is too intense and too illegible to ever make comprehensible. And it's too pedantic to say, This is what's wrong. The trauma is so vast. You need a project of ambiguity, where everyone brings their experience to the table. So I think the *Godot* project was very much in that tradition.

Would you say more about Trevor Paglen's work?

He's been doing the geography of places that people say don't exist. He has taken telephoto lenses used for photographing stars and used them to photograph places like Area 51 [a support facility in Nevada for U-2 spy planes] or, more recently in Afghanistan, to photograph Bagram Air Base and the secret prisons there that, at this point, are no longer secret. Three years ago they were still a secret. He's currently doing an art project where he's tracking secret intelligence satellites in the night sky, using visual art tricks to make visible things meant to be invisible. It's photographs of the night sky, but it's all this secret stuff that's up there. And there's lots.

Do you expect more government money for the arts in the coming years?

I think after the culture wars of the late '80s, the lesson for the Democrats was that arts funding is just too risky. It's not worth it. The damage that can happen to an administration over a $10,000 grant is potentially too big for what you might get in return. I think those lessons are not gone. The NEA still does not give individual artists' grants [in the visual arts]. People still see the arts as risky. I think they are right. And I think that's good. In terms of funding art, people say the economic collapse to some degree is going to assist risky work, because galleries and commercial art inevitably make the work that people produce inherently conservative. At Creative Time we've shifted our focus from the idea of quality to the idea of importance.

What's the difference?

I think quality is rooted in the history of beauty and taste, both extraordinarily conservative lenses for viewing aesthetics. I think importance is viewed from the lens of history, site, legibility and efficacy. Those categories are much more in keeping with the models deployed in grassroots organizing. We're doing a collaboration now with the New Museum and an artist named Jeremy Deller. It's called "It Is What It Is: Conversations About Iraq." We'll be hosting conversations at the museum with different experts—anthropologists, archaeologists—about the war in Iraq as well as the country and its culture. After the New Museum show has closed, me, Jeremy Deller, a military officer just demobilized from Iraq and an Iraqi refugee are going to travel across America from town to town with a car that was blown up in Baghdad, and we're going to talk to people about their relationship to the war.

Are artists picking up the slack for a deficient public sphere?

It's hard to know. I think there's an evolving understanding that we speak through culture now. We don't just speak with words. We speak with images, we speak with space, we speak with social relations. There is a form to communication. And artists have long deployed form as an arbiter of meaning. I think these tool sets are not just the purview of the arts. Clearly advertising uses them. And the left, to be frank, the more traditional political left, has been very slow in keeping up with people like Karl Rove and his deep understanding that culture outpaces class as a lens of analysis. It's not just us who have to be aware of the need to seduce people as well as bring political realities to the table. It comes with writing; it comes with everything. The arts have had that kind of awareness built into them. I think those are incredibly important political tools. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Schlepics

by AKIVA GOTTLIEB

In Joshua Cohen's "*Untitled*: A Review," the opening story of his brilliant but unheralded debut collection, *The Quorum*, a critic from "one of our more respected publications" is stunned into submission by a mammoth box appearing on his doorstep. Inside the package our hero discovers a book of more than 6 million blank pages—"pure, virgin white, like the snow around Auschwitz"—lacking pagination, footnotes, author credit, introduction, copyright, dedication, colophon or any other identifying marks. The necessity (and impossibility) of a response to this monumental blank—a nothing that is not and a nothing that is—drives the critic into a paranoid raving fit, but in his review of the untitled tome he steers himself toward a confident conclusion:

> In intent and execution this history without a title, this *Untitled* by Anonymous, is the best record of, and commentary on, the Holocaust this reviewer has yet encountered, the best in or out of print produced by, and in, the last half-century. Just as that noble laureate Elie Wiesel filled the need for a new word (*holocaust*: complete consumption by fire) for a new horror (the Holocaust), this anonymous author—if this massive thing even has an author—has found the only way to write about the event, the idea. Or not.

There's no *only way* to write about the Shoah—but there are many ways one shouldn't write about it. Cohen's imagined nonfiction chronicle is the perfect antithesis of the now-traditional Holocaust narrative, the kind that focuses on great escapes, improbable heroes, loathsome villains and superhuman acts of kindness. "It is *not* mawkish. It is not patronizing. It's not insulting." This masterpiece by Anonymous provides a textbook definition of negative capability, as direct as a math equation: $n^{6,000,000} = x$. "The word is sacred," writes the critic in his review. "Words strung together are not."

The attempt to find new words for a new horror aptly summarizes the past sixty years of Jewish fiction, and is the obverse of the stark, unapproachable purity of *Untitled* by Anonymous, or of T.W. Adorno, who declared in 1949 that "to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric." Nearly every modern Jewish writer of merit has contested Adorno's judgment. And once poetry is fair game, is commerce ever far behind? On a recent visit to the local multiplex—to see a popular mainstream entertainment about the death of God, no less—I counted four movie trailers about the Nazis. One was a vigilante movie, another a spy thriller, the next a May-December romance, the last a sentimental product for children.

Creating a book of 6 million blank pages, or a movie of 6 million frames of unexposed film, seems untenable, and not every Jewish author (or director) has the imagination or inclination to mint forms unique to this Subject of Subjects. World War II and its aftermath is *the* Jewish historical narrative of the past century—in a sense the only story worth telling—and its myriad channels of significance have proven to fit any plot, any genre, mostly without causing awkward ethical misgivings. As *New York Times* film critic A.O. Scott grimly noted, in a cautionary essay about this winter's slate of Holocaust movies, the Oscar sweep of Spielberg's *Schindler's List* helped to "domesticate" the Shoah for middlebrow audiences, making "the Holocaust…more accessible than ever, and more entertaining." We are now bearing the low-hanging fruits of this entertainment—such as *Angel at the Fence*, the sickly sweet, Oprah-approved Holocaust romance memoir recently exposed by *The New Republic* as a fabrication, the logical endgame of this cultural development.

But we are also reaching a crucial stage in modern Jewish storytelling, when the survivors of the Jewish people's defining struggle are issuing their final missives. Witness and its interpretation are giving way to a reckoning. Those last few testaments are landing on our doorsteps—the next sentences are waiting to be written. Former Knesset speaker Avraham Burg, in his recent disquisition *The Holocaust Is Over; We Must Rise From Its Ashes*, argues that—for the purposes of peacemaking—letting go of the past is preferable to misappropriation. "We have pulled the Shoah out of its historic context," he writes, "and turned it into a plea and generator for every deed. All is compared to the Shoah, dwarfed by the Shoah, and therefore all is allowed.… All is permitted because we have been through the Shoah and you will not tell us how to behave."

Aside from the indisputable value of witness testimony—each new tale an essen-

HANDSEL BOOKS

Angel Wagenstein

Isaac's Torah

Concerning the Life of Isaac Jacob Blumenfeld Through Two World Wars, Three Concentration Camps, and Five Motherlands.
By Angel Wagenstein.
Translated by Elizabeth Frank and Deliana Simeonova.
Handsel. 306 pp. $23.95.

Farewell, Shanghai

By Angel Wagenstein.
Translated by Elizabeth Frank and Deliana Simeonova.
Handsel. 382 pp. Paper $13.95.

Akiva Gottlieb is a writer living in New York City. His work has appeared in the Los Angeles Times, *the* Village Voice *and the* Forward.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tial accrual of evidence, a bulwark against organized forgetting—the richness of World War II literature is that every survivor story is a universe of drama unto itself, and no two survivor stories are the same. There is a survivor story—and here I blanch at what already sounds like a genre—to elicit every possible response, all valid except apathy. To lift the Shoah out of its historical context is a mistake, especially since that context remains so overwhelming and so incomplete. One cannot rise from the ashes without bearing their smudge.

In the annals of war, the biography of Angel Wagenstein, an 86-year-old Bulgarian Jewish novelist and screenwriter whose books are just now making their way to the United States, is noteworthy only for its convoluted narrative. Returning to Bulgaria as a teenager after his family's brief sojourn in France, he joined an underground antifascist brigade, was sent to a Nazi labor camp, escaped the camp, rejoined the Bulgarian partisans, got arrested again and then was condemned to death just as the Red Army stormed Bulgaria in 1944, saving his life. Wagenstein's debut novel, *Isaac's Torah: Concerning the Life of Isaac Jacob Blumenfeld Through Two World Wars, Three Concentration Camps and Five Motherlands*—written in 2000 but published in English last year—offers much of the same absurdist (and seemingly arbitrary) historical sweep as the author's saga.

A mock epic set in unambiguously epic times, *Isaac's Torah* embodies the humanistic notion that even the most unprepossessing life story should be bound like a Bible. Buoyed by a knockabout levity, like a *shtetl* cousin to *Forrest Gump* or Jaroslav Hasek's *The Good Soldier Svejk*, Wagenstein's picaresque story portrays Jewish humor and Jewish wisdom as inextricable twins and time-tested agents of survival. If Isaac, the narrator, has trouble getting from point A to point B, and if his countless jokes and Hasidic fables (nimbly translated from the Bulgarian by Elizabeth Frank and Deliana Simeonova) sometimes seem beside the point… well, isn't digression just another way of molding oneself in God's image? After all, "the Holy God, glory to His name, has more than once deluded you and promised things that He might have intended to fulfill, but was then distracted by other things and forgot. But you haven't even for a second come to doubt His glory, you've searched for extenuating reasons or consolations of the God-delays-but-doesn't-forget or God's-mills-grind-slow variety. Or don't you think so?" Unlike God's brilliant but unfocused Pentateuch, *Isaac's Torah*—for all its fits and starts—is mostly Exodus. And like his biblical namesake, Isaac finds himself singled out by the heavens as a human sacrifice, only to be saved from the chopping block through the same divine providence.

Our raconteur begins life as a modest tailor in Kolodetz, a village near Lvov. Over the course of a half-century and two world wars, ownership of Kolodetz will be passed among the Poles, the Soviets, the Nazis and seemingly any other occupying force willing to take an interest. If this relentless global struggle is being waged with the force of coherent ideologies, Isaac is none the wiser. As with I.B. Singer's elders of Chelm, displays of common sense by Wagenstein's fools illuminate the follies of ideological conflict. Isaac's spiritual guide, closest friend and brother-in-law is the Marxist rabbi Shmuel Ben-David, who runs both the Kolodetz *shul* and its Atheists' Club. In an early sermon, he works up a righteous fury:

> It's all stupidity.… Why am I here, I'm asking you? To guide you and take care of your souls, so that when you die, you'll go all clean to our God Yahweh, eternal be His glory. The same is supposed to be done by my colleagues—Catholics, Adventists, Protestants, Orthodox, Sabbatarians, and Muslims—to honor the emperor and for the glory of their own God. And what's the point, I'm asking you? When I know that on the other side of the front line there's a fellow rabbi who's guiding our boys—who can tell me now if they're ours or not ours?—to fight against you, to kill you for the honor of their own emperor and for God, eternal be His glory. And then the war will end, and when the plows begin plowing all through Europe, and your bones come up shining white in the fields, ours and not-ours, all intertwined, then nobody will know for what God and which emperor you died.

That the rabbi appears to be reading a chapter of the Pentateuch from an open prayer book is, to Wagenstein, an important detail.

If this jaunty, sentimental novel can be called a work of historical revisionism, it's only because Wagenstein focuses exclusively on the outliers of World War II. When depicting would-be heroes and supposed villains, he's only interested in the exceptions that prove the rule. While history continues its inexorable sweep somewhere in the background, enacting the tragic saga that casual readers should already know by heart, Isaac consorts with indifferent Nazis, sensitive Russians and likable Poles. Everyone re-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Events

INTERNATIONAL

Curious About Third World Issues?

■ Visit Nicaragua as part of a delegation observing rural and urban projects—healthcare, education and sustainable farming. Meet community leaders and development workers. See how the World Bank and the IMF affect the lives of poor and working class. February 21–28. Cost ($995) includes ground transportation, meals and lodging, experienced guide, air-conditioned van and translation. Limit: eight people. To benefit Hagar Luceros del Amanecer, a project for at-risk children in Camoapa. Sponsored by The Sunrise Foundation, Box 210, Williamsburg, MA 01096. Hogarlda@yahoo.com.

FLORIDA

Engaging Dialogue

■ Deerfield Progressive Forum. Provocative speakers, lively discussion. Saturdays, 10 to noon. January 31: Mark Solomon, "What to Expect From the New White House." February 7: Matthew Schwartz, "Playing Politics With Florida's Natural Environment." February 14: Hocine Fetni, "The Middle East in Crisis." February 21: Barry Lynn, "What Ever Happened to Separation of Church and State?" February 28: Doug Henwood, "Facing Our Economic Challenges." March 7: Leslie Cagan, "Mobilizing for Peace and Justice." March 14: Anne Feeney, "Songs of Protest: Yesterday and Today." Activities Room, Le Club, Deerfield Century Village. $3 donation requested. (954) 428-1598.

NEW YORK

The Religious-Secular Divide

■ "The Religious-Secular Divide: The US Case" is the next social research conference at The New School, March 5–6. Keynote speaker: Charles Taylor. Tensions between religion and secularism are longstanding, widespread and increasingly fierce. These are evidenced by debates over evolution; separation between religion and education and between religion and science; and religious influences on political decisions. This will be a forum for discussions about the past and future separation between the religious and the secular. www.socres.org/religiousseculardivide.

Beyond the Ballot: Making the Movement Matter

■ Join Amy Goodman, host of *Democracy Now!*, and *Nation* writers Liza Featherstone and Christian Parenti at a conference on movement building under President Obama. February 28. Sponsored by the Young Democratic Socialists. Academy of Environmental Science, 410 East 100th Street, New York City. To register, visit ydsusa.org., e-mail yds@dsausa.org or call (212) 727-8610.

The advertising deadline for Events is every Thursday. Rates: $210 for 50 words; $260 for 75 words, additional words (above 75) $2.00 each. To place an ad, call Amanda at (212) 209-5414.

ceives the benefit of the doubt. In his labor camp's Nazi lieutenant, Isaac can "detect distant notes of good intentions." Another gentleman is described as "a decent and noble anti-communist, with a barely perceptible Polish streak of anti-Semitism—something like a good aged wine with a bitter aftertaste."

To call *Isaac's Torah* unserious would be to fundamentally misunderstand Wagenstein's designs. Even as survivors bear the weight of their history, it's still incredibly difficult to remember sensations of pain. Looking back on the recent past, Isaac Jacob Blumenfeld has decided that all men are brothers, all enemies temporary and easily replaced. And official history should be left to official historians. Every time Isaac begins to dispassionately recount the steps toward the Final Solution, he stops himself: "We were politely informed that during a three-day period all communist functionaries, Jews, and Soviet officers in hiding were supposed to register at command headquarters, or else, according to wartime rules, they were going to be.... Well, shall I tell you, or can you guess yourself?" When Isaac's wife, family and friends perish—the book is unsparing, as it must be, in this respect—we feel the weight of their disappearance, a sense memory even more tactile than hatred for the evil forces responsible for their murders.

Wagenstein's third novel, *Farewell, Shanghai*, was published in English in 2007, and it's easy to see why it preceded *Isaac's Torah* on these shores. Drawing on his experience as a screenwriter, Wagenstein fashioned a sweeping cinematic melodrama that depicts an exotic and little-known chapter of Jewish history—the story of the Shanghai ghetto. (A 2002 documentary film by Dana Janklowicz-Mann and Amir Mann remains the best primer on the subject.) As an "open city" at the beginning of World War II, Japanese-occupied Shanghai became a safe haven for European émigrés and Jewish refugees. A modern-day Babylon, wartime Shanghai was a polyglot, destitute, filth-ridden city where the escaped Jews, who numbered 19,000 by 1941, lived mainly in dilapidated shacks. In the early years of the war, the refugees were assisted by a community of anticommunist Russian and wealthy Baghdadi Jews—the latter of whom arrived in the mid-nineteenth century, establishing a new outpost of a burgeoning Sephardic import/export empire. The refugees arrived before the bombing of Pearl Harbor brought the Americans into the war, and Nazi influence to Shanghai, and... well, shall I tell you, or...?

Narrated by an omniscient spectator who slips into third person after a brief introduction, the panoramic story of *Farewell, Shanghai* alights upon all of the city's wartime social strata, with vivid characters whose activities—including epic gestures of romance, espionage and betrayal—necessarily sidestep the good/evil dichotomy. In a book that bears almost no stylistic resemblance to *Isaac's Torah*, Wagenstein retains his focus on historical outliers. The Japanese leadership is pitiful rather than malicious, and one of our heroines is a beautiful blond Jew who idolizes Leni Riefenstahl and ends up employed by the Nazis. And naturally, the Shanghai ghetto features a heretic rabbi of its own, who leads Sabbath services in a Buddhist temple. When asked about the oneness of the Jewish God, he responds, "To tell the truth, I don't know anymore.... How are the Chinese worse than us? Or, let's say the Hindus, or the Polynesians? Why should their gods be false, untrue, and our own the real one and the only one?... People feel the need to believe. Let's leave them to do it as they wish."

Part of what makes this otherwise conventional historical epic unusually compelling is that its characters are shielded from the truth of their situation. Scraping by in claustrophobic and unsanitary ghetto conditions while laboring for minimal rations, the surviving Jews of Shanghai would only later discover that, relatively speaking, they were actually citizens of paradise. Wagenstein's late-life historical-fiction project is built upon this very paradox: to survive is to endure along with unshakable images of horror, but it's also the greatest gift imaginable.

In the end, most of the principal characters in *Farewell, Shanghai* are killed—many during an American bombing campaign. Even in a sanctuary city, the hand of fate acts with arbitrary mercilessness, aided by the banality of evil. Referring to the Japanese and, perhaps by extension, the majority of Nazis, Wagenstein sees wartime atrocities as "millions of small faults—composed of silence, indifference, obedience, myths of military honor."

One can esteem the impossible orthodoxy of *Untitled* by Anonymous and still find merit in Wagenstein's radical humanist agenda. Like the skeptic but soulful rabbis who lend his stories a spiritual current, the author recognizes that apostasy leads to unfamiliar but equally relevant truths. "In this inhuman battle, was it only a question of the evildoers and the righteous?" the narrator of *Farewell, Shanghai* asks. "Futile questions without an answer. Or with a thousand different answers." Or, in a just world, with 6 million.

It would be a shame to leave those pages blank. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Classified

While we reserve the right to edit, reject or reclassify any advertisement, The Nation *wishes its readers to know we don't have the facilities to check the promises made by our advertisers, and we have a strong presumption against censoring any advertisement, especially if we disagree with its politics. To advertise, contact amanda@thenation.com or call (212) 209-5414. Mail inquiries to* The Nation *Classified Department, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.*

ANCIENT SECRETS

JOSEPHUS

SCHOLARLY BOOKLET PROVES JESUS NEVER EXISTED! Flavius Josephus (Romans) created fictional Jesus, authored gospels. Amazing but absolutely incontrovertible. Over 40,000 sold in twenty-seven years. Send $10: Abelard-Reuchlin, Box 5652-B, Kent, WA 98064. Details: SASE.

BLOGS/WEB

READ UP-TO-THE-MINUTE NEWS. Politics, business, travel, political blogs, celebrity news, bios…more. www.jonesnyhistory.com; www.famouswelsh.com.

BOOKS

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE is to live it, and here is how: www.findthepurposeoflife.com; (888) 280-7715.

DOSTOYEVSKY AND DA VINCI understood that the key to Jesus is in John, the gospel that can humanize him or tragically breed anti-Semitism. morganibarra.com.

DR. LUMUMBA'S DREAM OF INCEST. A new twist on a touchy subject. (888) 280-7715. Also available at Amazon.com.

I'LL BE SOBER IN THE MORNING: *Great Political Comebacks, Putdowns & Ripostes*. $15. www.frontlineltd.com.

IN THE FLIP-FLOPS OF JESUS. Outrageous, scandalous, occasionally blasphemous behind-the-scenes look at the Christian movie business in Hollywood in the 1950s. $29.99 at Amazon.com.

EDUCATION

***THE NATION* ACADEMIC PROGRAMS.** *The Nation* has developed a distinctive series of academic programs and curriculums appropriate for college and advanced high school students. These programs examine a wide variety of political, cultural and social issues from historical and contemporary perspectives. For details about curriculums, to establish classroom access to *The Nation* Digital Archive or to inquire about the ways in which *The Nation* can assist with your scholarly research, please write to Charles Bittner, academic liaison: charles@thenation.com.

STUDY SPANISH IN MANHATTAN! Small, friendly nonprofit school. Twelve-week evening program begins January 26. Cost: $125. Go to www.centronyc.org; send further questions to info@centronyc.org.

GOURMET FOOD

REDUCE YOUR DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL. Fresh California certified olive oil. www.westcoastproducts.net. Specialty olives and olive oils since 1937. Orland, California.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

ESTABLISHED ENTREPRENEUR NEEDS A 200K INVESTMENT in 60-megawatt solar energy plant. Good security and good returns. E-mail slytot7@aim.com.

LIBERAL LIAISONS

GREENSINGLES.COM—free photo ads for progressive singles in the environmental, vegetarian and animal rights communities. Searchable listings for friendship, dating, marriage. Since 1985. www.greensingles.com.

LIBERAL LIAISONS

FETISHES AND FANTASIES fulfilled. Hot erotic talk with creative, sensuous woman. No limits. Personal, confidential. Call (866) 844-8286.

MATURE, INTELLIGENT CONVERSATION. Erotic, imaginative, independently operated. www.missaria.com. (866) 454-3763.

AURAL EROTICA. Well heeled, well spoken, not always well behaved. Fetish friendly, smart & sexy. (800) 717-LIZZ (5499); ElizabethPaxton.com.

SWM. Young 60s. Unused. Progressive, working class, environmentalist. Would be good mate for honest SWF for LTR and/or family. Reply Nation Box 465.

PRISON PICASSO. 48, nonviolent marijuana farmer. Seeks progressive Frida/O'Keeffe for correspondence. James Moore Jr., 03891-180/B-53, PO Box 9000, FCI, Seagonville, TX 75159-9000. www.myspace.com/jimmyrasta.

If responding to a Nation Box number, send replies to: Nation Box ___ , The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.

LITERARY SERVICES

RESEARCH, WRITING, EDITING. Write Away Consulting Inc. writeaway@nycap.rr.com. (518) 435-1690. Professional, thorough, timely.

MERCHANDISE

EXPRESS YOURSELF! Stickers, shirts, buttons, emblems and more—www.evolvefish.com. (800) 386-5846 for catalog or to order now.

SUPPORT *THE NATION* AND OUR NATION! Shop online at www.thenationmart.com and exercise subtle and not-so-subtle dissent. Most items are union-made. Great gifts!

OBAMA VICTORY POSTER
Features 50 historic front pages. **Just $11.00**
FrontPageObama.com

CAT LOVERS AGAINST THE BOMB 2009 wall calendar $8.95 + $1.75 postage. Cats & peace—what more could you want in a calendar? Order from: CLAB-NC, Box 83466, Lincoln, NE 68501, or toll free (877) 778-3434, or catcal@aol.com.

CHECK OUT 401BROKE.COM. 401(k) or 403(b) in the dumps? Spend what's left on some funny, affordable gifts.

MUSIC

SUPPORT MUSICIANS DURING RECESSION! *Patience Gloria* album available on Amazon and iTunes. We need your support!

ORGANIZATIONS

BRANDON, FLA., *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP FORMING. Contact Mary, (813) 689-8859.

ORGANIZATIONS

ALBUQUERQUE *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP meeting regularly. Call (505) 797-1455 or e-mail h.aarli@comcast.net for more information.

BRONX (RIVERDALE)/WESTCHESTER, NY, *NATION* DISCUSSION Group meets one afternoon a month. For further information please call Florence Gold at (718) 549-1601.

NORTHEASTERN OKLAHOMA *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP is looking for members. Contact Marilyn Clarke at (918) 728-7266 or clarkemk@hotmail.com.

SOUTHERN VERMONT *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP is forming, centered in Wilmington and the surrounding towns of Marlboro, Halifax, Whitingham, Readsboro, Woodford and West Dover, but all interested persons from the Brattleboro, Greenfield and Bennington areas invited to join. For information please call Bob Silverman, (802) 464-5149.

NORTH JERSEY *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP: Coordinator is Trudy Anschuetz. Call (973) 746-4135 or e-mail tgoblue1@aol.com.

PLEASANTON, CALIF., Fremont, San Ramon, Danville, Dublin, Livermore *Nation* discussion group now forming. Call John at (925) 462-6815 or e-mail supervalue10@aol.com.

POLITICAL ACTION

***NATION* STUDENT OUTREACH:** Attention student activists! If you're involved in organizing a progressive event, lecture or film festival on your campus or in your community and would like to distribute copies of *The Nation*, please let us know by calling (212) 209-5416.

ONLY AT BACKWARDSBUSH.COM. Count down the days, hours, minutes and seconds until President Obama is sworn in!

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

SOCIAL CHANGE JOBS. Weekly employment bulletin *Changeworks* (v2.0) covers progressive organizations across USA. Free sampling of job listings from latest issues at www.changeworks.org. (866) 276-7201.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED to teach English or computer skills, or help manage office of small, friendly nonprofit serving adult immigrants in Manhattan. Evening hours. Spanish a plus, but not required. Contact Centro de Educación de Trabajadores at info@centronyc.org; or go to www.centronyc.org.

PSYCHOTHERAPY

PAUL STEIN, PhD. Psychotherapy (Jung's approach), relationship(s). Initial consult no charge. NYC office or phone work. (646) 709-8634.

CHICAGO PSYCHOTHERAPIST, twenty-five years, all issues including depression, anxiety, relationships. From concerns of lawyers, academics and office workers to artists and students. Sliding scale, insurance. Deborah Hellerstein, PhD, (312) 409-9516.

REAL ESTATE

SANTA FE. Progressive Realtor® seeks same in clients. Peter Kahn, Santa Fe Realty Properties. (877) 982-6207 toll free; (505) 946-2254 direct; or pkahn@sfrp.com.

LEFT COAST, US. Work with The Realtor Who's on Your Side. Norma J.F. Harrison. (510) 526-3968. (866) 264-9029. NormaHa@pacbell.net.

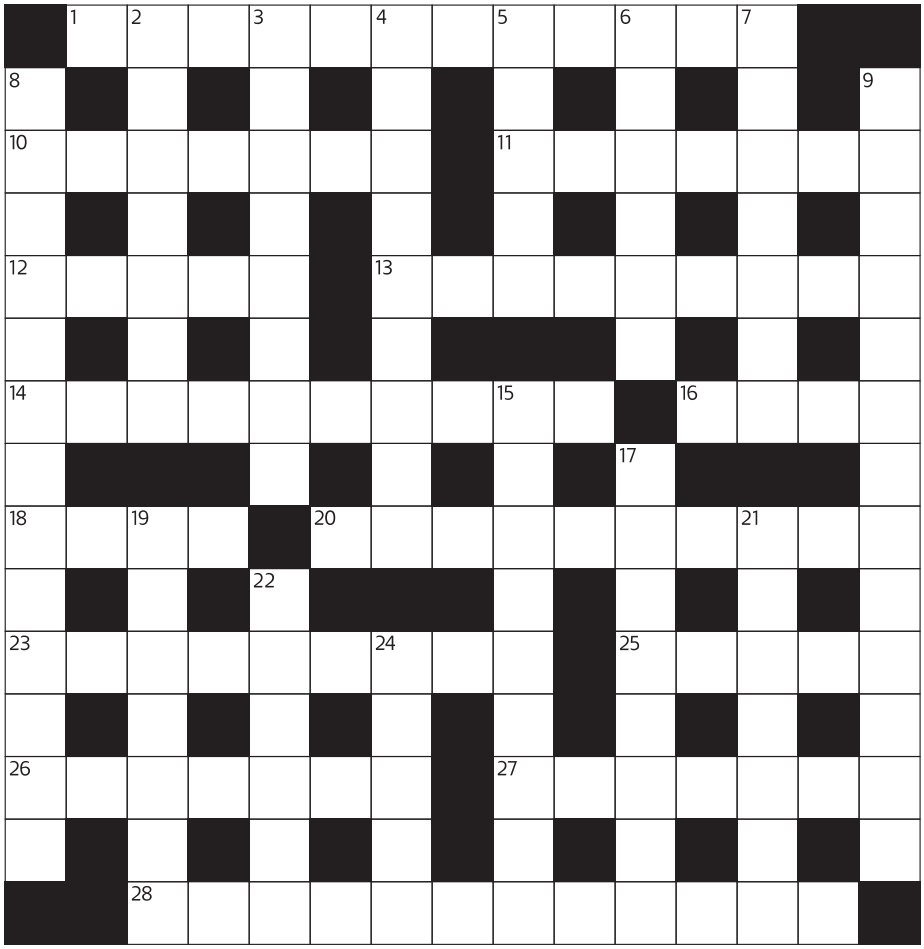
TRAVEL

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A NEW EXPERIENCE? Come & visit us. www.WildBurroRescue.org.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Puzzle No. 3156

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Accompanying the little devil, you get everything together—and can't be blamed this way! (4,8)

10 A small portion in spoken form, which might describe the movement of the spheres. (7)

11 Moses is a perfect example—as well as in a mixture of a gram of it. (7)

12 What a spider makes with some hesitation implied—as a music-maker, too! (5)

13 Giving you motivation—but you can't say you didn't inhale while you were doing it! (9)

14 A false lead, according to the color of the lady's band. (3,7)

16 The shape of the hat I found in a different country? (4)

18 Junior to 11 by one generation, like Hemingway… (4)

20 …whose mate gets to make music around her, which may bother your 13. (10)

23 The oracle is about to make a search, and withdraw into solitude. (9)

25 It's obvious that this is nothing to a heraldic color! (5)

26 A former player on the stage is a demanding type! (7)

27 One of Kukla's friends gets a shake, and is wild with excitement! (7)

28 Describing a party that brooks no opposition. (12)

DOWN

2 Toss a lousy dime over some protection against spills as this is drunk. (7)

3 Places for a straw type (or felt, or wool), but you wouldn't expect them to sprout your topper! (3,5)

4 A small unit of mass or weight could make you sick in a Russian airplane and crash. (9)

5 Recommends a sort of surge. (5)

6 In a capital, I can form a different kind of letter. (6)

7 As you can gather, I did shy badly from a High German language with bits and pieces from many tongues. (7)

8 A brash way of trying to make a hit with the gal, though they sometimes earn a few points on the field. (7,6)

9 Not the grinning cow in the ads—just one considered the butt of the joke. (13)

15 A tennis professional, in good shape for what the business hopes to make. (3,6)

17 A girl who just came out on the radio show—smart-looking, too! (8)

19 Flavorful ratio starting a quantity of this. (7)

21 Possible train, i.e., but not a moving description. (7)

22 Male or female on an Asian holiday, capable of making quite a bit of music. (6)

24 Where a yodel might be expected. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 3155

		A	P	O	S	T	R	O	P	H	E	S		
	T		U		O		A		O		A		P	
P	A	S	S		P	O	R	T	S		R	E	A	R
	N		H		H		E		T		L		T	
C	I	R	C	U	I	T		N	E	W	Y	O	R	K
	T		A		S		T		R				O	
L	I	B	R	E	T	T	O		N	E	T	T	L	E
			T				T				E			
C	L	O	S	E	T		E	L	S	I	N	O	R	E
	E				R		M		U		T		A	
W	A	S	S	A	I	L		O	N	T	A	R	I	O
	G		H		P		P		B		C		L	
R	U	S	E		O	Z	O	N	E		L	I	E	S
	E		B		L		L		A		E		D	
		T	A	X	I	D	E	R	M	I	S	T		

The Nation (ISSN 0027-8378) is published weekly (except for the second week in January, and biweekly the third week of July through the second week of September) by The Nation Company, L.P. © 2009 in the U.S.A. by The Nation Company, L.P., 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. (212) 209-5400. Washington Bureau: Suite 308, 110 Maryland Avenue N.E., Washington, DC 20002. (202) 546-2239. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. Subscription orders, changes of address and all subscription inquiries: The Nation, PO Box 55149, Boulder, CO 80322-5149, or call 1-800-333-8536. Publications Mail Agreement No: 40041477. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to Bleuchip International, PO Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2. Canada Post: Publications Mail Agreement No.: 40612608. When ordering a subscription, please allow 4-6 weeks for receipt of your first issue and for all subscription transactions. Basic annual subscription price: $52 for 47 issues. Back issues $6 prepaid ($8 foreign) from: The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. The Nation is available on microfilm from: University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Nation, PO Box 55149, Boulder, CO 80322-5149. Printed in U.S.A. on recycled paper.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SHOP AND DINE LIBERALLY!!

Find fair trade fashions, farmers' markets, organic dining, and other liberally-minded methods of consumption.

No Sweat Apparel.
This well-known online retailer sells only exploitation-free, union-made gear. No Sweat engages in open source production, which means that it makes public the sources of its clothing. Newton, MA www.nosweatapparel.com

Freecycle.
When Tucson environmentalist Deron Beal started up this not-for-profit online operation in 2003, his purpose was to reduce waste, save resources, and curtail landfill growth by creating an online gifting network that allows people to recycle used and/or unwanted items instead of throwing them out. www.freecyle.org

Broad Street Market.
Harrisburg's central market was founded in 1860 and fed Yankee soldiers who passed through nearby Camp Curtain. Once an outlet for Amish and Mennonite farmers, nowadays it's an ethnic salad of Germans, Austrians, Italians, Russian Jews, Hungarians, and native-born Americans.
122 N. Third Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102, (717) 236-7923. www.broadstreetmarket.org

Edward Koren

Blue Hill at Stone Barns.
Tucked in the hills of the Hudson Valley, Stone Barns is an eighty-acre operational farm, situated on land purchased by John D. Rockefeller in the 1890s. In the mid-1990s, his grandson David created the Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture, in honor of his late wife, Peggy, a farmer herself who had started a cattle ranch on the property and was the founder of American Farmland Trust, an organization dedicated to protecting American farmland. Blue Hill at Stone Barns was created when the owners of Blue Hill restaurant were invited to open a restaurant on the property and use ingredients from the farm.
630 Bedford Road, Pocantico Hills, NY 10591, (914) 366-9600. www.bluehillstonebarns.com

Find more in ***THE NATION GUIDE TO THE NATION*, your guide to the left in America from *The Nation* Magazine, America's biggest and leading political and cultural weekly. Telling the world since 1865.** By Richard Lingeman and the Editors of *The Nation*. Introduction by Victor Navasky and Katrina vanden Heuvel. Original Drawings by Edward Koren

PUBLISHED EXCLUSIVELY IN PAPERBACK BY VINTAGE BOOKS
AVAILABLE WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD

Find out more and tell us about your favorite places at www.thenation.com/nationguide/

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Smart investing is knowing what we own

PARNASSUS INVESTMENTS

- No-Load Mutual Funds
- Independent Research
- Environmental and Social Criteria
- Established in 1984

PARNASSUS EQUITY INCOME FUND Average Annualized Returns (as of 12/31/08)	1 year	5 year	10 year	Since Effective (8/31/92)	Gross Expense Ratio(a)	Net Expense Ratio(a)
Equity Income Fund - Inv. Shares	-22.95%	2.50%	6.11%	8.94%	1.04%	1.00%
S&P 500 Index	-37.00%	-2.19%	-1.38%	6.93%	NA	NA

(a) Expense ratios include gross expenses and expenses net of contractual waiver as described in the Fund's current prospectus dated May 1, 2008. Parnassus Investments is contractually obligated to limit the total operating expenses to 0.99% through April 30, 2009, exclusive of acquired fund fees.

The Standard & Poor's 500 Composite Stock Price Index, also known as the S&P 500, is a widely recognized index of common stock prices. An individual cannot invest in the S&P 500. The S&P 500 reflects no deductions for fees, expenses or taxes. Current performance may be lower or higher than the performance quoted. Call 1-800-999-3505 or visit www.parnassus.com for current month end performance. All performance figures reflect a partial waiver of fees where applicable. Without the partial waiver of fees, the performance figures would be lower. On 3/31/98, the fund changed its investment objective from a balanced portfolio to an equity-income portfolio: 10 year and performance since effective date may have been more or less if managed under the current mandate. Performance data quoted does not reflect the deduction of the sales load or fee. If reflected, the load or fee would reduce the performance quoted. Life of Fund figures are reported as of the effective date to the period indicated. Fund effective as of 8/31/92. Performance data quoted represent past performance and are no guarantee of future returns. Investment return and principal will fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original principal cost. Before investing, an investor should carefully consider the investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses of a fund and should carefully read the prospectus which contains this information and can be found on our website or by calling us.

PARNASSUS INVESTMENTS

1 Market Street, Suite #1600, San Francisco, CA, 94105 • www.parnassus.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED